The Blueing of America *Peter L. & Brigitte Berger*

THE NEW REPUBLIC

A Journal of Politics and the Arts — April 3, 1971, 50 cents

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That Chinese "Threat"

Allen S. Whiting

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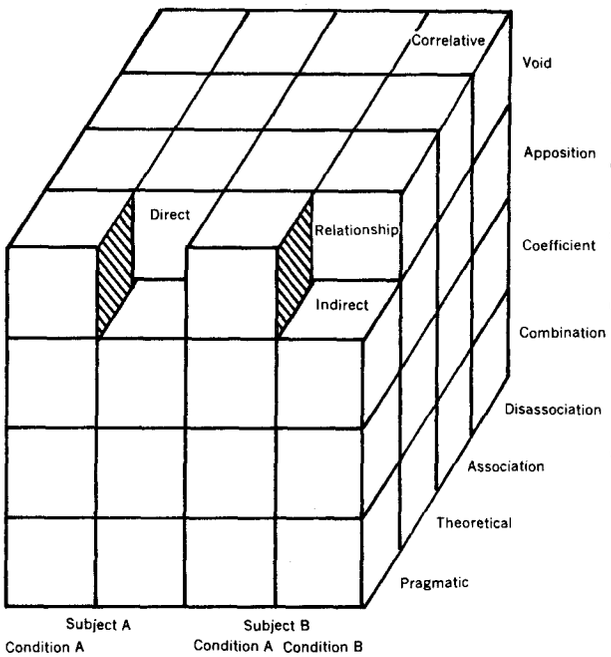

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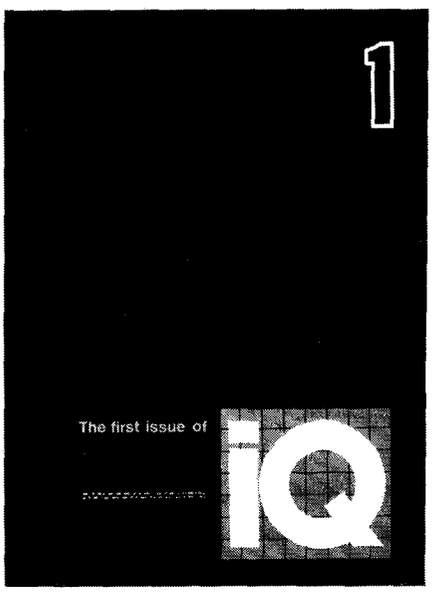

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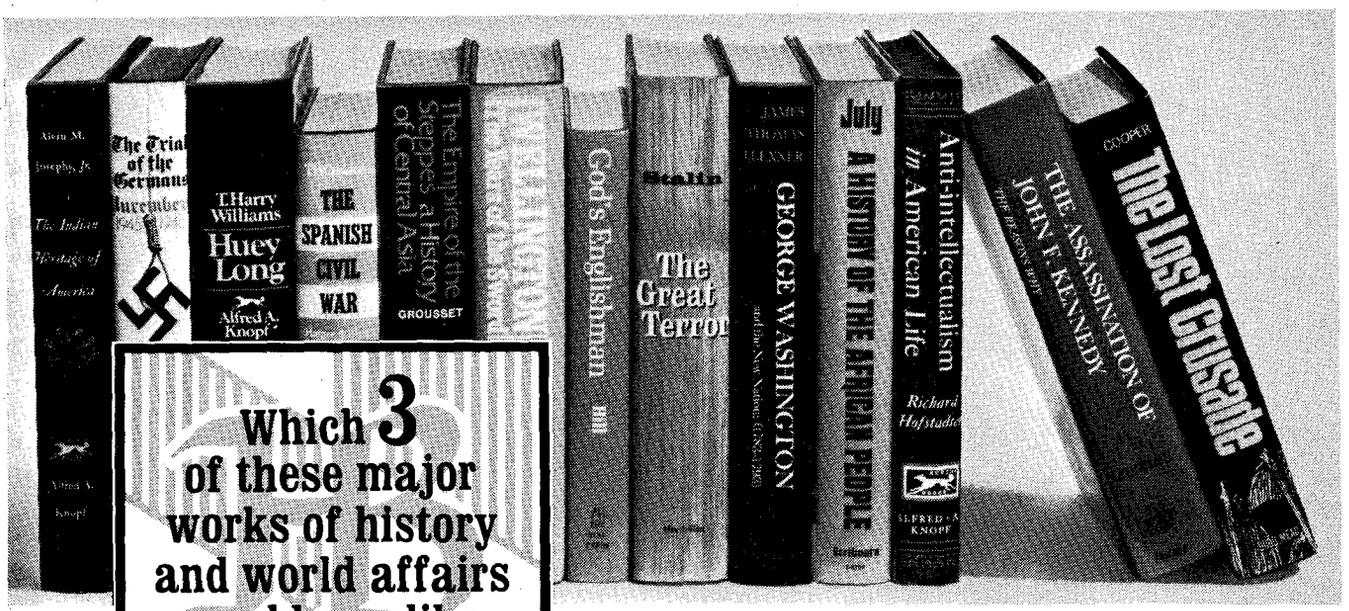

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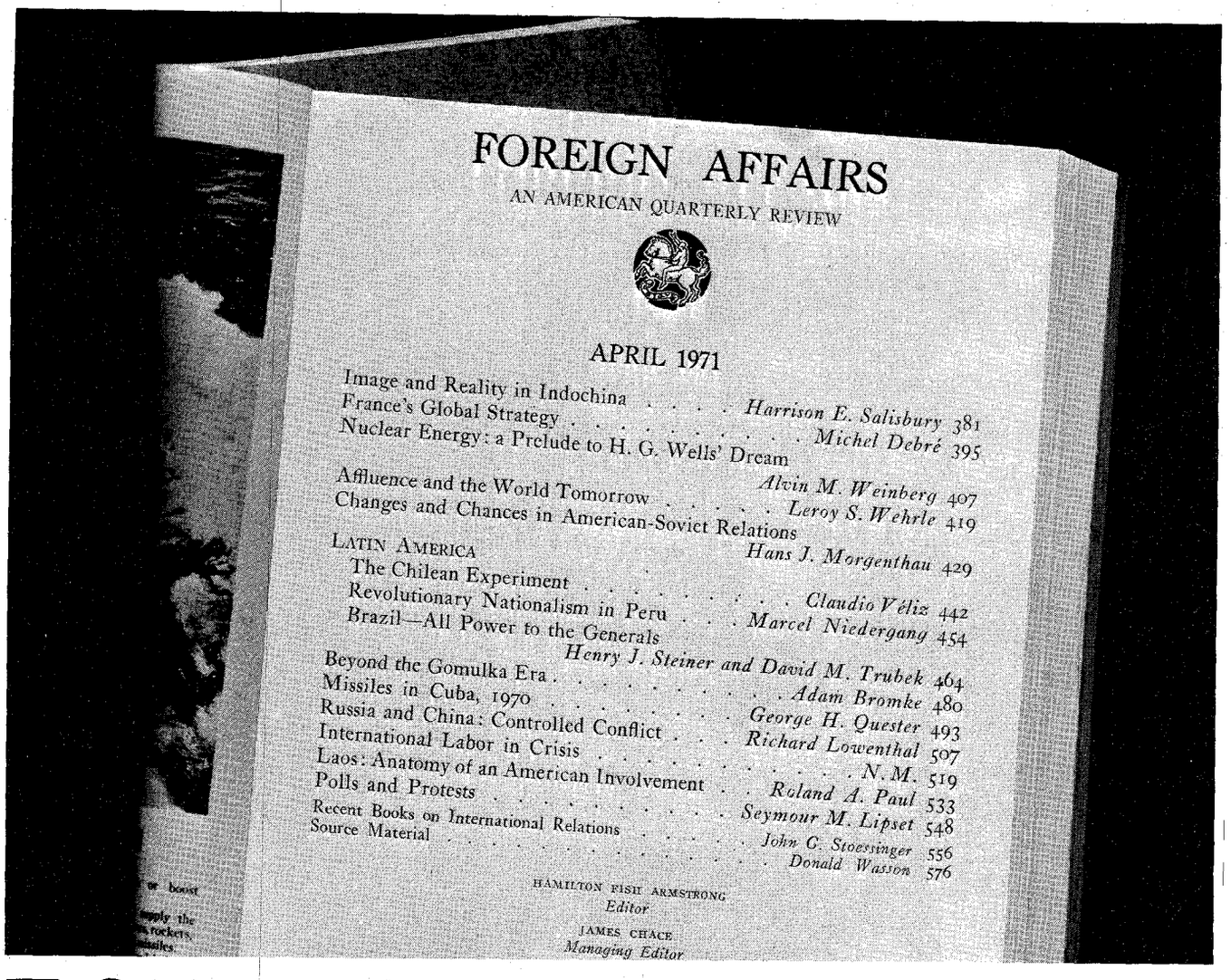
FOREIGN AFFAIRS
AN AMERICAN QUARTERLY REVIEW
APRIL 1971
Image and Reality in Indochina . . . . Harrison E. Salisbury 381
France's Global Strategy . . . . Michel Debré 395
Nuclear Energy: a Prelude to H. G. Wells' Dream
Affluence and the World Tomorrow . . . . Alvin M. Weinberg 407
Changes and Chances in American-Soviet Relations
Leroy S. Wehrle 419
LATIN AMERICA
Hans J. Morgenthau 429
The Chilean Experiment . . . . Claudio Véliz 442
Revolutionary Nationalism in Peru . . . Marcel Niedergang 454
Brazil—All Power to the Generals
Henry J. Steiner and David M. Trubek 464
Beyond the Gomulka Era . . . . Adam Bromke 480
Missiles in Cuba, 1970 . . . . George H. Quester 493
Russia and China: Controlled Conflict . . . Richard Lowenthal 507
International Labor in Crisis . . . . N. M. 519
Laos: Anatomy of an American Involvement . . Roland A. Paul 533
Polls and Protests . . . . Seymour M. Lipset 548
Recent Books on International Relations . . . John G. Stoessinger 556
Source Material . . . . Donald Wasson 576
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from Washington

Chitchat

President Nixon is not the inaccessible, reticent, uptight figure that some elements of the press paint him, but a warm folksy human being, and this discovery is thrilling the Washington correspondents who are queuing up to get the new one-to-one interviews. This reporter had to wait several weeks for an appointment because he was behind Barbara Walters of the "Today" show and Cy Sulzberger and a group of women reporters, and Peregrine Worsthorne from England and Howard K. Smith, but then at length the time came for my hour-long televised interview. I found the Chief Executive the picture of understanding and charm.

I was naturally a little self-conscious as the bright lights were turned on and the technicians adjusted my makeup and hung a small concealed microphone around my neck, but Mr. Nixon was tact itself. I felt that I had already got some of the real Nixon in the homely little details which he had given earlier to the women reporters, and Barbara, about his liking for cottage cheese and the difficulty he had in calling Mrs. Dwight Eisenhower "Mamie," and Mrs. Nixon's courage and stamina and her blend of Colombian coffee (he's a tea man himself), and his problem is not being comfortable wearing striped sport shirts.

But I explained that I had come to get his reaction to larger issues and he accommodatingly said he would postpone announcing Tricia and Eddie's wedding plans till later. It comes as somewhat of a shock to an ordinary newsman to realize that maybe ten or twenty million people are looking at you but Mr. Nixon was perfectly composed and his first reply set the informal, relaxed tone that has been so conspicuous at the White House recently. It also put at rest a lingering doubt about filling up the whole hour of prime time, for Mr. Nixon's pleasant rejoinder took seven minutes, and was as cozy and informal as could be.

The interview occurred in the White House library with a painting of George Washington looking down with a rather aloof expression and an empty fireplace between us and rows of book shelves behind, where Mr. Nixon likes to browse in the *Federalist* papers, and the lives of Washington, Franklin, Disraeli and Dizzy Dean.

As I recall it I asked whether, if an invasion of Laos was an "incursion" the retreat from Laos could be called an "excursion" (that is for the North Vietnamese)? But Mr. Nixon promptly explained that this was just the way the American press was playing the thing up. He said that he was glad I had asked the question because probably others misunderstood it too, after watching the way the thing was being presented by the media. Not that they didn't have every right to distort the thing if they wanted to, he explained, fairly, but that he had his duty, too, as Commander-in-Chief.

Due to the confusion of the bright lights or perhaps the odd expression on George Washington's face as he looked down on us, I sometimes had a little difficulty connecting Mr. Nixon's replies to my questions. To a question on value-added taxes, Mr. Nixon explained that he was a pacifist at heart having been raised a Quaker, and to a query about the Alaskan pipeline Mr. Nixon responded that his Administration has made the most progressive reform proposals of any Administration in this century.

But the President was precise about Vietnam. He said that to have called the war off and fixed an immediate date for coming home, as many people urged, would have been the easy, popular thing to do, but that this would not have given us peace with honor, which was essential if this is to be the last war. This, he said, is the thrust of his driving dream.

In words like those to ABC's Howard K. Smith, Mr. Nixon explained that we are "the major peace-keeping nation in the free world," and that as such we had to send troops into Cambodia and Laos. I was not quite able to follow this and thought I caught an enigmatic look on George Washington's face, but Mr. Nixon explained that now that South Vietnam has achieved the capability of "hacking it," world peace would receive a blow from which it might never recover if the US threw in the towel.

I was glad to have this point cleared up. The President's friendly, candid style came through very well. It was noticeable how many of my questions seemed to bring him around to the news media. How did he explain that a recent Gallup poll, I asked, showed 69 percent of the people felt he is not giving them all the facts about the war? Mr. Nixon immediately explained that he did not want to give the impression that TV pictures of the withdrawal from Laos are basically inaccurate, but they only showed ARVN battalions that had been "in trouble," he said, and never showed the ARVN battalions that had not been in trouble. Not, he hastened to add, that he thought this distortion deliberate and he understood perfectly well that the former pictures made news.

I thought Mr. Nixon showed himself very understanding about the press and TV, and repeatedly emphasized that the false impression they give was not really because they were dishonest or neoisolationist or unpatriotic. I was pleased to see him take this sophisticated attitude.

Mr. Nixon said whimsically that I would remember that he had his "showdown" with the press in 1962. "It is true," he said, with smiling sadness, "that of all the Presidents in this century, it is probably true that I have less supporters in the press than any President."

"Oh, but, Mr. President," I said reassuringly, "you have Joe Alsop and Bill White, and Richard Wilson and Kevin Phillips, and Buckley, and . . ."

He put me aside with a gently deprecating hand. Then repeating almost word for word his answer to Howard K. Smith, March 23, he said, in effect, that he was not there to bait the press and that the press was not there to bait him. He was just trying to get the facts. What did it prove? It didn't prove that the press was trying deliberately to make America look bad. That wasn't the point. They naturally were seeing it from one viewpoint while he, was seeing it as Commander-in-Chief.

That was the end of one of the most thrilling hours I ever imagined. As the bright TV lights went off, I left George Washington looking straight ahead.

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Contents

7-11 Comment
Follow the Leader, Offshore Oil, No to SST, Also Ran, Red Cross Contribution, Hazardous Substances, Priorities

12 Whatever Happened to Product Safety? – *Michael Lemov*

13 The Nixon Watch: More About Kissinger – *John Osborne*

15 The Wide Open British Drug Scene – *Jonathan Dimbleby*

16 Daley News: Chicago's Public Housing Fiasco – *Thomas M. Gray*

18 That Chinese "Threat" – *Allen S. Whiting*

20 The Blueing of America – *Peter L. Berger and Brigitte Berger*

24 Films – *Stanley Kauffmann*

25 Books – Reviews by *Reed Whittemore, David Littlejohn, Gerald W. Johnson*

32 The Arts – *Wolf Von Eckhardt*

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Follow The Leader

We are on the brink of believing – no, of suspecting – that most politicians hear. They may not always hear, or heed, the still small voice of conscience or reason, but in time they hear their constituents. Hubert Humphrey has heard. On March 1 he put his name to a Senate resolution calling for total US troop withdrawal from Indochina by the end of this year. He didn't brag about it, he didn't even announce it to the press, but he did it, and it is not a switch to be scorned. If politicians never changed course, never accommodated themselves to changing tides, we would have to despair of representative government.

Unfortunately, such adaptability is not one of Mr. Nixon's characteristics. He is made of stiffer stuff. He appreciates, as he told Howard K. Smith in the ABC interview, that "politically, there is a great temptation" to set a deadline for withdrawal. But the Presidency is above politics. Richard Nixon will not yield, he will not "throw in the towel," he will not "bug out." He will do what's necessary to keep Thieu-Ky or a reasonable facsimile in power, through continued application of dollars, training, weapons and "logistics support," the latter entailing the active presence in Vietnam for some time to come of a quarter of a million or so Army, Air Force, Navy and CIA personnel.

But Mr. Gallup tells us that the public isn't happy with that scenario. Seventy-two percent of those polled this January said they wanted all US troops home before the end of the year. (Four months earlier, 55 percent took the same position.) The Democrats are listening. They read that message more attentively than they do dozens of antiwar editorials in Mr. Agnew's unfavorite newspapers. We aren't saying that a majority of Democrats in Congress have caught up with public opinion, only that they're beginning to close the gap. Thus, meeting in caucus last month, Democratic senators pledged themselves to work for an end to the war by "no later than" December 31, 1972. The policy committee of the Democratic National Committee on March 24 went further, accepting Governor Harriman's call for withdrawal by the end of 1971. Earlier this month in the House, five Democrats – Spark M. Matsunaga (Hawaii), William R. Anderson (Tenn.), Jonathan Bingham (NY), Sam Gibbons (Fla.) and Edward P. Boland (Mass.) announced that on March 17 they would

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submit to the House Democratic caucus a resolution similar to Governor Harriman's. They didn't, because no quorum could be assembled on March 17, and also because they were persuaded by Carl Albert, Hale Boggs and Thomas Morgan to hold off until "a language acceptable to all" could be worked out. Their resolution is now scheduled for a hearing on March 31. In part it calls upon the Foreign Affairs Committee of the House to "take prompt legislative action on the Vietnam Disengagement Act and other such legislation. . . ." The Disengagement Act specifies a December '71 withdrawal deadline. In addition the resolution forbids spending any money in Vietnam after May 1, 1971, except to guarantee the safe withdrawal of troops and the release of prisoners. Representative Matsunaga reports that he has 50 sure supporters, 48 near certain supporters and 16 leaning favorably. If the resolution can't win a majority, a likely compromise is disengagement no later than the end of this congressional term, which is what the Senate Democratic caucus favors.

So there's some movement at the top. But what can be done to rouse the lawmakers, especially the Democrats, to a greater sense of urgency? Might the news from Laos stir them to shake a leg? The South Vietnamese have demonstrated how neatly a withdrawal of 22,000 men can be managed. Jack Foisie of the *Los Angeles Times* reported last week from the Laotian border that "the embattled remnants" of the South Vietnamese armored column "made an orderly withdrawal," and that the tanks "held their spacing like professionals" – and they were being shot at! "Obviously," Mr. Foisie wrote, the soldiers "were relieved to be out of the Ho Chi Minh Trail complex in Laos." But they were also "cheered by having outsmarted the North Vietnamese who were reported to have placed a massive roadblock astride Highway 9 about three miles inside Laos. The South Vietnamese had pulled an end-around play . . . Three times they crossed the meandering Xe Pone river to get back to the Highway 9 border-crossing point. They had found shallow fords which the enemy had evidently ignored."

Note that this is not a "retreat," that according to the Defense Department the retiring troops "acquitted themselves very well." Put simply: they prudently decided it wasn't worth staying. No one yells "bug-out"; Mr. Laird described the Laotian operation as "going forward according to plan." A South Vietnamese briefing officer commented that "tactically we may say [that] the withdrawal of South Vietnamese forces was perfect." That suggests that if the President were to put his mind to it, he too could devise a timetable for honorable disengagement (not retreat), and one that could be carried out in an even more "perfect" fashion, for our departing troops would be cheered on, not fired on. What are we waiting for? If the South Vietnamese can do it, why can't we?

Offshore Oil

Over the past decade, the White House has given a number of answers to the question: why are we in Vietnam? They have included: self-determination, the credibility of our commitment, treaty obligations, the danger of falling dominos, the Chinese threat, and even the security of the US itself. But is there another, undisclosed reason – oil? Some suspect so. More than 10,000 letters have been received by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee within the past several weeks from people who wonder if it's true that the United States is planning to guarantee investments by American companies eager to drill for oil off the coast of South Vietnam. The letters in part were inspired by a California-based peace group called Another Mother for Peace, as well as by speculative reports in the press (from *Business Week* to the *Village Voice;* see "Oiling the Escalator," by Gabriel Kolko, *NR* March 13). Relatively little information is available, however, to support or disprove that Vietnam policy has been or is now influenced by the oil industry, or that the Administration has a long-term policy designed to further the interests of US concerns seeking oil concessions.

Several senators and at least 25 representatives are nevertheless of the opinion that the question deserves to be examined more closely. Majority Leader Mike Mansfield hopes that "the whole story is laid bare." Sen. Aiken (R, Vt.) has expressed his concern in a short speech on the Senate floor. Sen. Fulbright (D, Ark.) has exchanged letters with the State Department. In the House, Rep. William R. Anderson (D, Tenn.) is pressing for clarification, and is inclined to think the oil companies have better-laid plans for Vietnam than the Nixon Administration does. Freshman Congressman Jim Abourezk (D, SD) has asked for an investigation by the House Foreign Affairs Committee (so far he has had no reply from the Committee's chairman, Thomas E. Morgan), and Congresswoman Bella Abzug (D, NY) has introduced a resolution co-sponsored by 24 other members requesting hearings by the Government Operations Committee. So speculation is heating up, though as yet there is not much light.

The two letters to Fulbright from David M. Abshire, Asistant Secretary of State for Congressional Relations, said Senator Aiken, lead one to believe "Vietnam's offshore oil prospects are less than encouraging and little interest has been expressed in them. On the other hand, Vietnam Foreign Relations Council's economic report, which is a quasi-official government publication states: 'Somewhere in the continental shelf off South Vietnam's shore lies hidden one of the most spectacular petroleum deposits in the world. . . . Expectations already running high have been strengthened by the intense interest of well-known international oil companies.'" Aiken perceives a contradiction. Mr. Abshire wrote that "it is not certain at this time whether

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there are any petroleum deposits in [South Vietnam] or in offshore areas. No concesions have been granted to any oil companies in Vietnam." However, the Vietnamese National Assembly last year did pass a "petroleum exploration and exploitation law" authorizing the government to accept bids on 18 offshore oil concessions from foreign companies, and Mr. Abshire acknowledges that "the promulgation of that law . . . served to attract the interest of various international oil companies'." The Republic of Vietnam, to date, "has not granted offshore concessions nor has it offered any for bid," and the State Department spokesman declares that our government "has not provided South Vietnam any technical assistance relating to offshore oil exploration."

Abshire's second letter to Fulbright goes a bit further. Standard Oil (Esso) "has expressed an interest in the country's [South Vietnam's] oil potential to the Department of State," but the Department is "not aware of any timetable for opening the offshore zone for bids." Nor has the US, he says, had anything to do with the submission, debate, amendment, or passage of the new oil exploitation law. Elsewhere in Southeast Asia, namely Thailand, a number of American firms do share an interest in "provisional concessions for offshore oil exploration." Gulf, Amoco, Tenneco and Phillips "have applied for [AID] investment guarantees," but have not received any yet. Petroleum companies are operating in the Gulf of Thailand under provisional agreements pending enactment by the government of Thailand of appropriate legislation. No oil yet is being taken out, but seismic soundings indicate it's there. Cambodia, in 1969, granted a concession to a single French company covering Cambodia's entire offshore oil area.

There is coastal oil in Southeast Asia, no doubt of that, but there is considerable uncertainty about the extent of US commitment, if any, to the concession-hunting oil industry. Congressman Abourezk's poll of oil companies elicited statements from four (Esso, Phillips, Marathon and Union) that they paid to get the results of a seismic survey covering 4000 miles of continental shelf to the east and south of South Vietnam. So they, at least, are interested. None of the oil companies with whom Rep. Abourezk has been in touch, nor the Ray Geophysical Division of Mandrel Industries, Inc. of Houston, which did the survey, would disclose its results. Mr. Abshire of State apparently has some clue, for he informed Abourezk that the explorations "have been favorable."

Last week an executive vice president of Texaco dropped by Abourezk's office. The company line, as paraphrased by an Abourezk staffer, is that "our job is to look for new sources of petroleum. We're looking wherever we think there may be oil, but as of yet we have no specific interest in Vietnam." According to the staff source, all the companies say that "they've not received any official word from Vietnam about these oil leases, nor from the State Department or anyone in the Administration. Should oil be discovered, their decision to go in and risk millions of dollars would be based on a number of considerations, one of which would be the stability of the country or some sort of US government guarantee of their investment." Will such guarantees and assurances be available to them? *Business Week* says American firms who asked the State Department informally about the "outlook for security and political stability in South Vietnam" were told "the future is inscrutable." As indeed it is.

No to SST

It isn't the $134 million, although the nation can ill afford to misspend even that much. It's the symbolism of the decision of Congress to delete what remained of fiscal year 1971 funds for the Supersonic Transport (SST) that's important. For the first time in recent memory, the military-labor-congressional complex with all its muscle on "the Hill" lost something it really had its heart set on.

There had been rumors the vote in the House would be close, but few believed a majority would be able to defeat the phalanx of labor and industry lobbyists who gathered at the second-floor entrance to the House chamber. They were all there. Three customarily pro-union members were seen pulling up their shoulders and tiptoeing through, parodying their own plight. On the floor, the leadership worked feverishly. GOP Leader Gerald R. Ford got a little confused and told his colleagues a "yes" vote would keep SST going, whereas a "yes" vote was just the opposite – in favor of the motion of Rep. Sidney Yates (D, Ill.) to strike funds for SST from the Department of Transportation appropriations for FY71. A flushed Hale Boggs, in his new role as Majority Leader, bellowed at his colleagues in a pro-SST performance later described by one member as "the last sonic boom to be heard on the House floor." Then the congressmen lined up for the recorded teller vote: 217 in favor, 204 against. SST had lost The leadership rallied and demanded a second roll call after members had scattered. Enough returned to beat it again, 215-204.

Reporters immediately checked the votes of the freshmen: 33 against SST, 18 for. Why? Rep. Harold Runnels (D, NM), a moderate who has the bulk of his state's conservatives in his district, explained that his polls showed his voters were 7-1 against SST. The only support he found was around White Sands Missile Range. Rep. Art Link (D, ND), who represents a basically rural district and relies on members of the

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Farmers Union and the National Farmers Organization for the bulk of his support, said he wasn't opposed to SST, *per se*; normally, he would favor such research projects. But he counted off on his fingers the reasons he couldn't explain a pro-SST vote back home: the new Railpax system was cutting out passenger service to many small communities in his district because of lack of funds, the Farmers Home Administration was cutting back on loans, education funds were in short supply, medical research was being short-changed. All these were more important to Rep. Link's constituents than Boeing's two prototypes.

The recorded teller vote also helped Rep. Yates. In the past, House members have hidden behind a cloak of anonymity of teller votes. They could not now.

Few if any votes in the House were determined by organized labor – outside the votes of members who represent districts with a concentration of aerospace industries – Rep. Bill Cotter (D) of Hartford, Jim Corman (D) of California's San Fernando Valley, Lionel Van Deerlin (D) of San Diego, and Washington's six Democrats. Generally, Northern liberals joined with the younger crop of moderate Southerners and almost half the Republicans to override intensive lobbying by the leadership of both parties, industry, and labor.

A week later, the Senate found itself caught in a bitter struggle between the White House and the aerospace industry and the labor lobby on the one hand, and a renewed outpouring of protests from the grass roots. Sen. Clinton P. Anderson (D, NM), who switched from a pro- to an anti-position, explained his vote in four words when he stepped into the lobby a few minutes after the tally: "I read my mail." His letters that morning had run 78 against SST and 8 in favor. It had been building up for two weeks. Another who bowed to his constituents was Sen. Lowell Weicker (R, Conn.), who campaigned against SST last fall and then let it be known he was thinking of changing sides. The outcry from Connecticut was so loud Weicker's staff had to man the phones in his office all weekend. Hubert H. Humphrey had a similar experience after a report got out that he was thinking of supporting SST. That's three votes the public outcry can claim, and inasmuch as the Administration switched men like Peter Dominick (R, Colo.) and James Buckley (Con, NY) and the final tally was 51-46, it was just enough.

The Senate had its bit of drama. Senator Birch Bayh (D, Ind.) who had been skiing in the West and was grounded by snowy weather earlier in the day, was racing through the air from Chicago as the vote was taken. He lost the race, even though the clerk read the roll call as slowly as it has ever been read.

The scuttling of the SST should dispose of any lingering thoughts among Washington cynics that ecology is an innocuous issue. President Nixon has done a lot to drum up interest in the environment, and to his distress it is that interest which prevailed in the Senate last week.

Also Ran

A homosexual astronomer and Harvard PhD named Franklin Kemeny last week ran fourth in a field of six candidates for the District of Columbia's nonvoting delegate to Congress. Although his vote was not impressive (he got only about 1.6 percent of the total, compared to 58.5 percent polled by the winner, the black, Democratic candidate Walter Fauntroy) his presence in the race was. He claims he is the first admitted homosexual ever to run for Congress. Kemeny has made something of a career of homosexuality. He founded the Mattachine Society chapter in Washington and spends most of his time writing and lecturing on the subject. He ran a serious race for the House, discussing all the issues that concerned the other candidates; and they in turn found it necessary to discuss the rights of homosexuals. Kemeny didn't expect to win. But he didn't lose either, for he got what he was after – serious attention for a subject in some places still regarded as taboo.

Red Cross Contribution

The American Red Cross has had a traditional mandate to protect victims of war. It was in this spirit that it began, in 1969, asking Americans to write the President of North Vietnam requesting him to honor the 1949 Geneva Conventions regarding humane treatment of prisoners, mail privileges and visits. The intent was "to convince Hanoi that on this issue there is no division in American opinion." Senators Fulbright and McGovern endorsed "Write Hanoi."

Since 1969, in "a grass-root effort mobilized by the American Red Cross," Write Hanoi ads and messages have been sent to the nation's daily and weekly press, 1700 college newspapers, 5000 radio and TV stations. Bill stuffers have been supplied to utility companies; millions of leaflets have been distributed at football games. *The Reader's Digest* is about to run a fold-out of postcards for mailing to Hanoi. The Red Cross says that hundreds of thousands of letters have been sent and that Hanoi has "eased its stand somewhat on the identification of prisoners and on the exchange of communications with their families."

North Vietnam claims that its captives are not "prisoners of war" entitled to Geneva rights but "war criminals," and that in any event it treats them well. However, the material distributed by the Red Cross supports the Administration contention that North Vietnam is violating the Geneva POW conventions. A sample Christmas card ("Send a Christmas card to an enemy") appealed to Hanoi to "stop the brutality." "Send a letter to North Vietnam," says a Red Cross

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poster depicting a wretched man in a bamboo cage, "maybe they'll open it." Astronaut and Presidential POW emissary Frank Borman is quoted as calling upon peace groups – "If they are really interested in the majority of our prisoners" – to intercede with their North Vietnamese contacts. Hanoi and its allies, a Red Cross presentation to the Congressional Club concluded, must "stop using those helpless captives and their families as pawns in a political-military struggle."

Red Cross president George M. Elsey wrote college editors recently that "the matter should and can be considered on a humanitarian level, not a political one." But it is difficult to interpret the Write Hanoi campaign as nonpolitical. Its effect is to support the President in his refusal to set a date for complete withdrawal of US troops, which North Vietnam insists be done before prisoners can be released. The President and the Red Cross would have it that Hanoi alone is responsible for the impasse on the prisoner issue. Those who think it helps the POWs to write Hanoi might also consider dropping a line to President Nixon.

Hazardous Substances

Last week ("Selling Death"), Thomas Whiteside called attention to the sudden leap in cigarette advertising in magazines of large circulation since the banning of such ads on television. Now, in a letter to the Commissioner of the Food and Drug Administration, Charles C. Edwards, Mr. Whiteside has urged that agency to take "very vigorous action . . . to warn the public in unmistakable terms of the very great dangers to health and life itself of cigarette smoking."

Under the Federal Hazardous Substances Act, the Commissioner has the authority to declare as hazardous any substance that is found to be toxic and that has "the capacity to produce personal injury or illness to man through ingestion, inhalation or absorption through a body surface." Cigarettes have been shown beyond doubt to be toxic under the definitions of Section 2(g) of the Act in that they do produce illness to man through inhalation and/or absorption via the entire respiratory tract. It is strange, Mr. Whiteside writes Dr. Edwards, that "federal marshals acting on behalf of the FDA should seize, as they did on March 8, 1971, 2000 cases of two laundry detergents on the grounds that the detergents had toxic effects on skin, and thus were considered dangerous to human health under the Federal Hazardous Substances Act – but that at the same time the FDA should be standing passively by and neglecting to classify as hazardous" a product – cigarettes – that causes "illness, disablement, and death on a huge and continuing scale." There is bitter irony, too, in the fact that the FDA has banned cyclamates as food additives "because they have been found to be carcinogenic in experimental animals and in the avian species, and thus, by extension, to be potentially carcinogenic in man." Is it not "grotesquely inconsistent," Mr. Whiteside asks the Commission, to ban cyclamates in the marketplace and "fail to lay the lightest regulatory finger on the pushers and peddlers of a product that has been shown beyond all doubt to exert, as cigarettes have, widespread carcinogenic and other effects in man."

At the very least, cigarette manufacturers should be required by the FDA to progressively reduce the tar and nicotine content of their products.

Priorities

Reading the latest figures on how the US government spent its money last year, we felt a twinge of nostalgia for the drowsy days of Calvin Coolidge, who believed that "the business of America is business." Today it's war. Total federal expenditures in fiscal 1970 were $196.6 billion; $80.3 billion went for defense; of that $23.2 billion went for Vietnam.

"How could any country so rich be having a recession?"

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Whatever Happened to Product Safety?

It didn't live long, but in its two-year life the National Commission on Product Safety battled one industry after another on behalf of consumers and usually won. It compelled a leading manufacturer of dishwasher detergents to substitute less toxic ingredients in its product. It goaded gas appliance manufacturers to develop an insulated cover for dangerously hot floor furnaces and glass container manufacturers to start to develop a nonexploding soda bottle. Industry response invariably followed commission hearings.

While it lasted, the commission actually functioned as a consumer regulatory agency, and not as the study group some might have wanted it to be. Without statutory authority to force anyone to do anything, it repeatedly induced manufacturers to change the design of products to incorporate new safety features. In the two years of its existence it probably had more impact on consumer product industries than most permanent federal agencies. One Federal Trade commissioner called it "the most effective federal commission in existence." According to Ralph Nader it was the "best $2 million the government ever spent." In its final report, in June 1970, the commission advised President Nixon and Congress that notwithstanding its efforts thousands of Americans continue to be needlessly killed and injured by the products they buy.

The commission's report was handed to an employee at the White House gate, the President having declined to meet with the commission's chairman, Arnold Elkind. The only official recognition given the report was a press release by Virginia Knauer, President Nixon's consumer advisor, promising a careful review and evaluation. As yet none has been forthcoming.

With the release of the President's consumer message, the reason for the cold shoulder becomes obvious. To his credit, the President has recommended the passage of new product safety legislation. However, he has recommended the law be enforced by The Department of Health, Education and Welfare, not an independent consumer product safety agency.

The Administration's decision against the creation of an independent consumer safety agency is of great significance for consumers. The commission was highly critical of the performance of existing federal agencies with consumer safety responsibilities. It emphasized that the Food and Drug Administration, the Health, Education and Welfare agency that would probably enforce the new law, had taken more than two years to remove from the market the deadly household cleaner carbon tetrachloride. It had never used its powers to temporarily ban hazardous consumer products during extended administrative proceedings, and had generally concentrated on food and drug matters to the exclusion of other consumer products.

The commission undoubtedly had the FDA in mind when it concluded: ". . . where it exists, Federal product safety regulation is burdened by . . . bureaucratic lassitude, timid administration, bargain-basement budgets, distorted priorities, and misdirected technical resources."

When the commission's initial product hearings opened in Boston in December, 1968, a manufacturer of a lidded crib that had caused the strangulation death of an infant ignored the commission's invitation to testify. The father, however, did testify, along with a medical examiner who described the manner in which the crib caused the death. The press fully reported the story. After that, no manufacturer ignored the Product Safety Commission.

Although most study commissions do no more than file their reports, the Product Safety Commission pushed through a new law – the Child Protection and Toy Safety Act of 1969, which closed a loophole in federal protection for children by giving the Food and Drug Administration authority to ban mechanical, electrical and thermal hazards in toys. The Toy Manufacturers Association sought to weaken the bill in committee but did not succeed. Unfortunately, the enforcement of the law, by the Food and Drug Administration, has been less than vigorous.

In January 1969 when the commission began looking into the safety of sliding glass doors, storm doors and other glass products used in the home, it met resistance from the National Association of Home Builders and the Federal Housing Administration. At that time the FHA still permitted dangerous nonsafety glass in sliding doors in FHA-insured houses. The commission invited Eugene Gulledge, former president of the Home Builders and now assistant secretary of the Department of Housing and Urban Development, to testify on the reasons for the Home Builders' opposition to safety glass. Gulledge refused to testify and the commission was about to issue a subpoena when the White House intervened and asked that he be excused since the Home Builders were having their annual convention in Houston on the day of the hearing The commission went ahead without Gulledge. When the FHA failed to send policy-level officials to the hearing, commission chairman Elkind established that they were in Houston with the Home Builders. Elkind's public criticism of the FHA and extensive testimony on the deaths of consumers who walked through glass doors again demonstrated the commission's clout. The FHA subsequently reversed its position and published new regulations requiring safety glass. The Home Builders too changed their minds on the issue and at least six states passed mandatory safety-glass legislation.

The commission's last fight was with one of the largest consumer industries, manufacturers of television receivers. Based on reports of spontaneous fires,

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primarily in color television sets, the commission investigated and found that thousands of fires were occurring each year, apparently caused by combustible and defective parts. Manufacturers were requested to redesign the sets and recall the defective models. In a confrontation between Elkind and two other commissioners and representatives of virtually every US and Japanese TV manufacturer, the industry at first refused to do anything, claiming the problem was insignificant. Elkind stated the commission would immediately hold public hearings on the hazard. Industry spokesmen requested one hour to meet privately. Shortly thereafter, the industry agreed to develop new standards for color television sets to eliminate the fire hazard. They kept their promise, but without the commission around to review the standards' effectiveness and compliance by manufacturers the consumer can't be sure how well his interests has been protected.

While mail from consumers to the defunct commission has continued to pile up, industry lobbyists have been searching for alternatives to its recommendations, particularly that of an independent safety agency. Twelve trade associations and corporations contributed some $90,000 for a study of household product injuries that the industry hopes will refute the commission's injury estimates: 30,000 deaths, 20 million injuries annually in accidents associated with household products. The industry contributors are the American Gas Association, American Insurance Association, American Ladder Institute, Association of Home Appliance Manufacturers, Electronics Industries Association, Gas Appliance Manufacturers Association, National Electrical Manufacturers Association, Outdoor Power Equipment Institute, Sears Roebuck, J. C. Penny and Underwriters Laboratories, Inc. Three Government agencies also contributed several thousand dollars to this study, due to be completed by May. The Food and Drug Administration of HEW, the Environmental Control Administration, and the National Bureau of Standards each allocated federal funds to an industry group to conduct a study designed to refute the findings of another federal agency. The funds were committed notwithstanding the fact that the government had already spent $2 million for the product safety commission's investigation.

With the demise of the commission, the industries it compelled to design safer products were freed from effective government control. At the injury rates projected by the commission, 2500 Americans die each month and over a million are injured in accidents involving consumer products. Consumers lost more than they know when the commission expired.

Michael Lemov

Mr. Lemov *is staff director of the subcommittee on foundations of the House Small Business Committee. He served as general counsel of the National Commission on Product Safety.*

The Nixon Watch

More About Kissinger

My report last week on the roles of Secretary of State William P. Rogers and the President's adviser, Henry Kissinger, left unsaid a good deal that seems worth saying about Kissinger. Here, then, are some additional impressions and thoughts.

Kissinger's recently disclosed habit of meeting at the White House with opponents of the Indochina war is in character with him and with his conception of the job that the President expects him to do. Eugene McCarthy lunched with Kissinger in his elegant White House office on March 15. Senator George McGovern had breakfast with him there on March 12. A Catholic nun, a Quaker professor of physics and a young antiwar activist, all of them named by the Justice Department as co-conspirators in the alleged plot of the Berrigan brothers to kidnap Kissinger, met with him in the basement war-room at the White House on March 6. Kissinger has had four talks in the past 12 months with Averell Harriman and two with Harriman's former deputy at the abortive Paris peace negotiations, Cyrus Vance. Twenty-one other meetings with prominent individual critics of Nixon war policy have included four with John Kenneth Galbraith, two with John Gardner of Common Cause. There have been 19 meetings with groups of antiwar students, 28 with delegations of antiwar professors and teachers, 56 with other academic groups that didn't come to protest but included critics of Nixon policy.

Why Kissinger does it and what he and the President hope to get out of it are good questions. One is told and must believe that Nixon and his adviser are not fools enough to suppose that a chat with Henry Kissinger will alter the views of Gene McCarthy or George McGovern. Kissinger is not about to give his critics a chance to go from his office to the camera and say that he tried and failed to convert them. Politics enters, of course: anything that tends to quiet protest and to evince a readiness to hear out the critics is to the President's political advantage. McGovern got a distinct impression that Kissinger would have been disappointed if their meeting had remained the secret that Kissinger later said he wanted and intended it to be. Although Kissinger is outraged by the suggestion that his meetings with professors and the like may also be to his advantage, to the extent that they moderate hostility toward him in the academic community, he would be less than human if the thought didn't cross his mind.

But I prefer another answer, derived from the answers heard at the White House. It is that the many hours taken from Kissinger's crowded schedule for such meetings reflect his desire and the President's to diminish the damage that both of them know the

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Indochina war and Nixon war policy are doing to American society. Kissinger speaks of the need for "a reconciliation of society" in terms and in a manner that allow no doubt of his conviction that it must be accomplished and that the war will prove to be a greater national tragedy than it already is if the reconciliation that he tries to prepare and further with his meetings is not accomplished.

Kissinger's sense of the need and the tragedy does not inspire him to welcome or advocate an end of the war on the terms that the critics whom he invites to the White House advocate. Some of them recognize and grant, however, that Kissinger in his sessions with the critics is attempting in his fashion to serve a purpose larger than the immediate interests of the Administration. The attempt seems comical to some, ironical or futile to others. It interests me because it tells things about Henry Kissinger that otherwise might not be apparent. Tom Davidson, one of the Berrigan three, remarked to columnist Mary McGrory after their meeting with Kissinger that "he's got this weird thing for us who operate out of the morality bag; he sees himself as the conscience of the Administration." Doubtful though Senator McGovern was that his meeting was of any use, he said that the unspoken question that appeared to pervade his discussion with Kissinger was, "How do we resolve this thing with minimum disruption of our society?" Minimum disruption could connote minimum opposition to the war, but McGovern did not recall that Kissinger sought either to minimize or to decry opposition. It was conceivable though not at the time apparent to him, McGovern said after some reflection, that raising the question and encouraging future thought about it was Kissinger's principal purpose in inviting him to the White House.

In his conversations with invited dissidents, at his famous background briefings for the press, and in private talks with reporters and commentators, Kissinger takes the greatest care to conceal any differences that may exist between him and the President and, indeed, between him and such other participants in the foreign policy and national security process as the Secretaries of State and Defense. The only policies that he discusses and (invariably) defends are the President's declared policies. A result is that trying to identify and track Kissinger's particular contribution to Nixon policy is a tricky business. It is made the trickier by Kissinger's way of implying, sometimes by nothing more than a grimace or a tonal nuance, that the record contained in his voluminous and meticulous files may some day show views and positions quite different from those now attributed to him. The safe course for the contemporary chronicler is to assume that United States policy would be little different from what it is if Kissinger were in total charge of it. But, this qualification allowed for, the Kissinger touch and some of the shifts over the past two years in Kissinger's positions can be discerned.

His major contribution to Vietnam and Indochina policy has been the provision and bid for a negotiated settlement. I am convinced that Kissinger calculated in 1969, and led the President to calculate, that Hanoi would choose a negotiated settlement in preference to a prolonged war. The alternative course of "Vietnamization," entailing a gradual and limited shift of combat responsibility to the South Vietnamese, was not expected then to become the only attainable alternative to a rate and kind of withdrawal and to a degree of political concession that Nixon and Kissinger regarded in 1969 and still regard as shameful surrender. Kissinger is said to believe now that Vietnamization has a better chance of success than he thought it had in 1969. But his controlling calculation in that year turned out to be a colossal miscalculation. From the failure to achieve negotiation have flowed the consequences of widened war in Indochina and revived opposition to the war that confront the Administration.

Kissinger's associates do not know to this day whether, in his private discussions with the President, he wholly supported the widening of the war into Cambodia last year. What is known is that he was visibly and unusually uncomfortable when he explained and justified that "incursion." The response to subsequent inquiries suggested that he was unhappy not so much with the action itself as with the belligerent rhetoric in Nixon's announcement of the action. Kissinger encouraged the impression that it was intended to have effects beyond Indochina, among other things putting the Soviet government on notice that Nixon is capable of doing the unexpected and therefore should not be baited with avoidable challenges. But he preferred at the time to let the action speak for itself.

An interesting question now is whether Kissinger is or will be for validating the Soviet presence in the Middle East by placing American with Soviet forces in an international peace-keeping force. The adopted view would appear to be that the United States is ready to do it, in the unlikely event that Israel is willing. The inquirer gathers, however, that it's State Department and Rogers policy, but not as yet Nixon policy and certainly not Kissinger policy. Although Kissinger's NSC staff has overseen a continuing study of possible American positions in the Middle East, the peace-keeping question has not yet come to the President for decision and Kissinger has not been called upon to declare himself. Henry Kissinger is protecting his options and guarding his flanks until he comes to the moment of decision, alone with the President. *Note:* my reference last week to Kissinger's "sometimes cruel ways" with his staff distressed him. Kissinger grants that he is exacting, harsh on occasion But not "cruel." He is right; the word was poorly chosen.

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Horn of Plenty

The Wide Open British Drug Scene

London

At midnight in Picadilly Circus, there are two, maybe three junkies in sight. The popular press, nowadays, is deprived of its lurid predawn photos of "hordes of hippies" sitting "fixing" at the foot of Eros. The police have long since moved them on. Sensational reports of the spread of the drug menace abound, however, feeding a public which – largely in ignorance – demands suitably outraged indications of the slide into decadence of British Youth.

The ignorance is understandable. The British drug scene is still largely unmapped. Personal contact and word-of-mouth reports are its only guides. There are hardly any statistics, except for heroin. It was the rapid spread of heroin addiction in the sixties that first made the British aware that they had a problem. Before that there had been only a handful of addicts, who, since the setting-up of the National Health Service by the postwar Labour Government in 1948, had been able to obtain their drugs on prescription from a doctor. In accord with the principles of the NHS that anyone should have "every necessary type of health care and treatment" freely available, once a doctor had diagnosed heroin addiction, he would complete a prescription form which the addict would then take to a druggist who would give him the amount of heroin prescribed. Originally there was no charge for the service, but today with exemptions for the young, the old and the very poor, a prescription costs $.30. It rises to $.48 in April.

For the ten years after 1948 the number of opiate addicts registered with the NHS remained static. Suddenly with the advent of the sixties the number leapt from a longstanding 300 to close on 3000 in eight years; by 1968 the figures were doubling every 18 months. The explanation (if not the cause) was massive overprescription by a handful of incompetent or greedy (private prescriptions were lucrative) doctors. For the first time a blackmarket was created as addicts sold off surplus supplies to a predominantly youthful clientele, who after a few weeks would themselves register as addicts and so qualify for legal supplies at no charge. The British "master plan," to contain drug abuse by making blackmarketeering unprofitable, was fast collapsing.

So amid great publicity, in 1968, the government set up a chain of Treatment Centers throughout the country, though most (15) of them were in London. Doctors were forbidden to prescribe heroin to addicts except under special license. In practice these licenses were only issued to doctors working at the Treatment Centers; addicts had to register at these Centers if they wanted legal supplies. According to the official figures this has caused a startling drop in the rate of increase of addiction – a mere 3.5 percent in 1969. There are however a number of reasons why nobody is rejoicing.

Although all the Centers are attached to large hospitals under the auspices of the Ministry of Health, they operate autonomously. Sharp conflict has arisen between the "hardliners" and "liberals" who run them. The former (in the majority) will only prescribe minimal "maintenance" supplies of heroin and wean addicts on to its synthetic substitute, methadone. The "liberals", on the other hand, refuse to prescribe methadone and only attempt to cut down the amount of heroin when they think the addict is psychologically prepared to "withdraw".

Critics of the tougher policy argue that it is self-defeating. Addicts who are deliberately underprescribed with heroin are, they say, now selling their methadone prescriptions on the blackmarket – thus creating a new addiction problem – and using the proceeds to buy illegal, poor quality Chinese heroin. Certainly Chinese 'H' is in abundant supply, on sale at well-known street corners in the West End of London for around $14.40 a grain. The authorities are worried by this development: there are fears that, sensing a fresh market, the illicit heroin manufacturers in the south of France will divert some of their supplies from the US to Britain.

Equally worrying is the growth of barbiturate abuse. Many heroin addicts are supplementing their meager legal supplies with barbiturates, which they can get on prescription from any druggist, crushing them and injecting them intravenously in a water solution – a highly dangerous procedure. The habit is fast spreading to other groups. No one knows how many addicts there are, but few doubt the true figures (taking into account amphetamine and barbiturate dependence) are well in excess of official estimates and still climbing. Both amphetamines and barbiturates (taken in pill form) along with LSD, and, of course, cannabis, are used regularly or experimentally by a large group of young people, including, recently, schoolchildren. No big town is immune. The drugs are easy to obtain: doctors prescribe barbiturates on the National Health quite freely – there were over 16 million barbiturate prescriptions last year – and these supplies are augmented by private prescriptions from a few doctors who for $7.20 or so will prescribe a general prescription without asking questions. They are obtained also by thefts from mother's bathroom, manufacturers' production lines and drug stores. In some areas doctors have banded together to stop the prescription of amphetamines and they've had some success. But the move is not universally popular and is not likely to extend to barbiturates. "If they gave up prescribing

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those," one psychiatrist said, "they'd all die of overwork." The blackmarket in all these drugs is disorganized but extensive. It does not take long to discover which is the right pub or coffee bar to go and "score."

The same is true of cannabis – the most popular and controversial drug. The last government, without a murmur from the press, rushed through panic legislation to curb its use, giving the police unprecedented powers to search and detain (without a warrant) anyone they suspect of carrying drugs. They use these powers with zeal, to put it mildly. In practice the law is grotesquely unfair: the police concentrate almost exclusively on the long-haired young. The conviction rate for cannabis has jumped every year: in 1969 it rose by 40 percent to just under 5000. This has had no visibly deterrent effect. Cannabis is on the way to respectability.

The law would not lead one to suspect anything of the sort. In theory you can receive 10 years in jail and a $2400 fine for carrying cannabis. But this has failed to stop the traffic. Most "pushing" is still casual, but with consignments being found in cans of fruit, tins of meat and even (500 lbs) in the luggage compartment of a pink Rolls-Royce, it is evident that some importers are developing a sound business sense. Until now governments have been exclusively repressive: severe prison sentences or heavy fines are meted out for the most serious offenses.

At this moment a comprehensive new bill is making its way through the House of Lords, updating previous legislation and introducing more. It recommends the setting up of an advisory committee on "the social consequences" of drug taking, but despite this, its approach is as stern as ever. In making a new distinction between unlawful possession and trafficking, the Home Office states: "Penalties (for trafficking) . . . are increased to massive proportions; this is in line with British thinking that drug traffickers merit the severest punishment. Nevertheless possession remains a serious criminal offense."

But how is the distinction between "possession" and "possession with intent to supply" to be made? By amounts? By police whim? The question matters. The new bill proposes maximum sentences of five years and/or unlimited fines for the former, but ten years and/or unlimited fines for the latter.

What effect will the bill have once it becomes law? It is unlikely to cut down the spread of drugtaking: as the Director of the National Addiction and Research Institute puts it: ". . . The fundamental factors that have led to the outbreak of addiction in British society are still operative, and if one avenue is closed another will open." Indeed while one generation smokes and drinks, another has even started sniffing glue fumes and eating the contents of 36-cent nose inhalers for *their* buzz. Drugs are more available than ever. In the words of one social worker: "For the potential addict in Britain things look pretty good."

Jonathan Dimbleby

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Chicago's Public Housing Fiasco

Daley News

by Thomas M. Gray

Chicago

There is mounting evidence that Richard J. Daley deliberately used the threat of racially integrated public housing to whip up a backlash in blue-collar wards where his grip had been slipping, so he could step in as a defender of those neighborhoods and propel himself back into the mayor's office in the April 6 municipal election with a strong margin. If this turns out to be a true interpretation of events here during the past few weeks – the evidence at this point is strong, but circumstantial – then it will have been a very expensive election for the taxpayers. The city will lose hundreds of millions of dollars as the popular Model Cities program ends and urban renewal, not so popular, ceases to be funded by the federal government.

Our story begins at 5:56 p.m. Friday, March 5, when a minor employee of the Chicago Housing Authority breezed into the city clerk's office with a bulging

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briefcase and faced a cluster of waiting reporters. Sam M. Lucchese, acting public relations director for the Authority that is landlord for 160,000 poor and mostly black Chicagoans, turned toward the cameras with chin thrust forward and posed for the 10 p.m. news. But he wasn't happy to be in the clerk's office. He was there on a nasty errand that the Housing Authority had tried to avoid by every legal means, or at least to postpone beyond the mayoralty election. He had come to deposit with reporters a list of 275 new sites for low-income public housing. Most of the sites were in white areas, where black men proceed with caution by day and not at all after sunset.

Upstairs, Mayor Daley's people were trying to work out the most effective way – effective at the polls – to extricate their boss from this awkward situation which was entirely of his own making. This business of forcing disclosure of the sites before the election, many were convinced, was a plot by "liberals" to upset efficient operation of the city and the near-certain reelection of the mayor. The Housing Authority's chairman, Charles R. Swibel, had once accused a federal official of "trying to destroy the city," because the man insisted that Chicago had to provide some low-income housing for its citizens on a nondiscriminatory basis, or stop getting federal approval for urban renewal clearance that has benefited the developers of expensive residential property, including Swibel.

Down the street two blocks, at the campaign headquarters of Richard E. Friedman, there was some glee among the staff over the Authority's finally forcing the mayor's hand by revealing the sites on which it planned to put public housing. Friedman, a 41-year-old liberal non-Machine Democrat, is running against Daley as a Republican. The glee was premature.

Three days later, Monday, March 8, Daley held a press conference to denounce the plan of his Housing Authority, a plan he had tacitly consented to a week earlier in order to preserve his federal funds. The following day, he announced that the city would build its own public housing, although everyone knew he had no funds, and on Wednesday his captive City Council obediently buried the proposed sites in an inactive committee.

Friedman was left trying to straddle an impossible issue that split his projected coalition of blacks and white liberals on one side, and tax-bitter white homeowners on the other. Daley had grabbed the whites, disregarded the liberals who are an impotent political force in Chicago in citywide elections, and counted on his patronage system to keep the black poverty wards in line.

Let's go back a bit. In 1969, the Illinois division of the ACLU won a case against the Chicago Housing Authority aimed at ending policies that confined poor blacks to crime-infested, brick high-rise colonies in the ghetto. It was not a difficult case for the ACLU. A few scattered housing projects were in marginal white neighborhoods, including the mayor's own Bridgeport, occupied by whites. The rest, at least 95 percent, was dropped carefully into the most impacted black poverty cores of the city, where the faithful precinct captains of the ward bosses could more conveniently distribute their favors and threats.

Judge Richard B. Austin found the Authority guilty of racially discriminatory site selection and tenant placement and, in July, 1969, entered a detailed order telling the Authority how to correct this defect. Besides scattering public housing throughout white wards, the judge – a sternly independent product of the city's Democratic organization – ordered severe limitations on building size, the percent of public housing in any given census tract, and decreed that half of any future project would be reserved for residents of the immediate neighborhood. The latter provision of the order was important, because it meant that projects would not become black islands.

The Authority did not appeal the decision; nor did it build any housing. Finally the judge, impatient at the delay, entered another order in July, 1970 that said, in effect, "go ahead and comply with the desegregation order by building some new public housing."

While the initial desegregation order was palatable to Daley's Democratic organization, the compliance order of a year later presented problems. The judge had ordered the CHA to present its site plan to the Chicago Plan Commission by August 20, 1970 and to the City Council by September 20. Both bodies had to approve the sites before the Housing Authority could acquire land. Presentation of the sites to the city council in September, 1970 would by no means guarantee that any public housing was built – much less occupied – in white areas before the 1971 municipal elections; it would, however, mean that reporters would know exact locations where the Authority planned to build. They would almost certainly feel obliged to report those sites in their newspapers. People who had worked to shelter themselves and their children from contact with black people might not like it. They might blame the mayor and his aldermen before there was a chance to explain, in the confidential whisper that passes behind a precinct captain's cupped hand to a voter's ear, that there was nothing to worry about; that the mayor always took care of these things. The people might even vote against the mayor and his loyal aldermen.

So, while no appeal had been made from the original desegregation order, every effort was made to stall the court order to implement it. An expensive outside law firm was hired – at whose expense remained unclear. Twice, the Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit turned the CHA down, but it took months. Finally, Thurgood Marshall, the emergency Supreme Court Justice for the Seventh Circuit, rejected a last-minute appeal for an emergency injunction. Judge Austin's

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March 5 deadline for filing the sites would have to be complied with.

The story was page-one news in all four Chicago papers and an important item on the four television newcasts that night. There was a predictable outpouring of rage and resentment from white homeowners.

Chicago has been called the most segregated American city. That probably is true. A full 98 percent of its black citizens live either in all-black communities or in areas that are rapidly becoming black. A scant two percent live in what can be called stable white neighborhoods. It is a city tailor-made for the panic peddler – the unscrupulous realtor who makes a tidy living buying property from frightened whites at far below its fair market value, immediately reselling to housing-hungry blacks at far more than cost. When white homeowners learned that the CHA planned to send black people to live among them, the reaction was strong.

The backlash had been anticipated by the Housing Authority. With HUD's approval, a consulting firm had been hired more than a year before to assemble public relations materials and a network of influential community leaders, to lessen the fear of white communities. Soothing words had been written about the scattered nature of the planned developments, and glossy pictures were available of architects' renderings of tasteless but small buildings that would fit nicely into the working-class neighborhoods where the projects would go. There was also general agreement with HUD on a variety of construction and leasing programs to spread low-income Chicago families throughout not only the city but the metropolitan area. The Housing Authority, it later came out in court, had already found 25 suburban sites for Chicago public housing. There was no mention of metropolitan-wide plans.

But when Sam Lucchese walked into the city clerk's office, he presented newsmen only with a folder containing a list of sites and a terse statement from the executive director of the Housing Authority, C. E. Humphrey, deploring the need to reveal them. A decision had been made. None of the attractive material – in effect, making the CHA an advocate of its own plans – would be used when the public housing bombshell was dropped on the voters. If there was going to be turmoil, anger, indecision in the precincts, it was reasoned, that reaction could be turned – with quiet assurances from 40,000 regular Democratic organization precinct workers – to Mayor Daley's advantage.

How Real Is It?

That Chinese "Threat"

by Allen S. Whiting

The only consistent and comprehensible explanation for US policy in Southeast Asia, from Presidents Eisenhower to Nixon is "the containment of Communist China." The ultimate justification for an American policy of military treaties, bases, subversion and war has been and is "the Chinese threat." What is it?

So far as Southeast Asian spokesmen are concerned, it is easier to find anti-Chinese views than a will to unite against Peking. This suggests either that different things are meant by "the Chinese threat" or that different policies are preferred to meet it, or both. For example, American officials and journalists in the Philippines or Indonesia readily elicit a vigorous affirmative response to the question, "Do you believe China poses a threat," but this is more likely to reflect hostility to local or "overseas" Chinese than fear of Peking.

To be sure, racial prejudice and fear of economic domination by Chinese moneylenders and traders can combine with a genuine threat of subversion from Peking. Thus traditional Malay hostility to and fear of Chinese ascendancy received fresh impetus with the still simmering insurgency, almost wholly Chinese in composition and clearly dependent upon Peking and its Southeast Asian network for guidance and material support. Thailand's strictures against the Chinese threat are more complicated. On the one hand they

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reflect genuine apprehension that Peking's support for dissident Thai politicians in exile, for neglected or oppressed minority peoples in the disadvantaged northern provinces, and for an avowed Thai Communist Party, can combine to forge a united insurgent movement of serious proportions.

Judging by Thai behavior, however, the greater perceived threat, as between Peking and Hanoi, is from North Vietnam via Laos. Should US policy reduce or remove American force from the mainland of Southeast Asia, one strong Thai sentiment will be for a reassurance agreement with China to mitigate further pressures from Indochina. This is, of course, the policy that was pursued by Prince Sihanouk for more than a decade, whereby he actively sought Chinese aid to check Vietnamese encroachment. Although any serious hope of Peking's moving against Hanoi was an obvious illusion, Sihanouk nonetheless beefed up Cambodia's minuscule military force with Chinese weapons, while seeking Peking's approval for his border claims against South Vietnam, claims that clearly affected the aspirations of Hanoi.

Still another view has been that of Burma, where the Chinese threat is explicit in the form of public and private backing for the dissident Burmese Communist Party, as well as for separatist Kachins battling government troops along the Chinese border. Burmese officials seldom speak to outsiders about "the Chinese threat" and then only in discreet whispers. Instead they have chosen direct diplomacy, negotiating a tacit *modus vivendi* with Peking.

This necessarily superficial survey serves to illustrate the variable content of "the Chinese threat" as articulated in Southeast Asia. If "proof" of the "threat" depends on statements of Southeast Asian leaders, the argument is specious. Worse, it can be circular to the extent that these leaders either accept our assertions as based on better intelligence and analysis than they have concerning Chinese Communist ability and intent, or parrot our analysis back for its manipulative use in winning American support for their personal or national interests.

Just as Southeast Asian views vary, so too does the Chinese threat as defined by US policy. At one extreme, with the fewest adherents and the least credibility, is the specter of invasion by a population of 750 million. At the opposite extreme is the notion reflected in President Nixon's recent State of the World message that singles out Chinese "hegemony" as something we must resist. This concept is so vague and susceptible to several definitions as not to inspire any particular policy. Least of all is it able to call on the sacrifice of lives and wealth in order to forestall influence which inevitably accompanies propinquity and power in international relations. The hollowness of this rationale was evident in President Nixon's claim that China, the USSR, Japan and the US will compete for influence in the area, hopefully counterbalancing the possible ascendancy of any one of them. Japan lacks any present or prospective military force in Southeast Asia. The Soviet Union's primary interests will remain limited to the Middle East and possibly the Indian subcontinent. This leaves only the United States and China, with the vagaries of the Nixon doctrine no substitute for Peking's inherent advantages so far as influence – as opposed to control – is concerned.

The myth that Hanoi wages Peking's war by proxy dies hard, but die it must if there is to be any end to the Indochina war that involves a compromise settlement with Hanoi. Hanoi's willingness to pursue the Indochina war in the face of steadily escalating United States military opposition cannot, by any stretch of the imagination, represent forced submission to Mao Tse-tung. On the contrary, Hanoi has repeatedly bargained with Moscow and negotiated at Paris in clear defiance of Peking's advice. If we seriously intend to negotiate with North Vietnam, we must recognize it has interests which it considers as legitimate and separable from those of China.

A stronger case for a Chinese threat lies in the subversion and insurgency of Communist parties whose inspiration and material support come largely from China. Among these the most prominent are the Burmese, Thai and Malayan movements. There is no question that *Peking Review* touts these armed insurrections as foreshadowing victorious "national liberation" struggles, that Radio Peking broadcasts inflammatory messages to incite local support of Communist rebels, and that money, munitions and manpower train and equip such insurgents in Chinese base camps. Moreover such support is forthcoming whether the local government, like Burma, enjoys good diplomatic relations with China, or hostile relations, as with Thailand. The critical variable here seems to be the ability of these insurgents to organize their forces and to mobilize the populace against the regime. If they lack organization, as in Burma, or mobilizing appeal, as in Thailand, they remain as a potential but not a serious danger. For its part, Peking's willingness to support such movements has never gone much beyond what local recruitment could justify. No significant manpower contributions, despite the presence of identical linguistic and ethnic groups in China, have crossed the border to assist insurrections in Southeast Asia. At a higher theoretical level, Lin Piao's famous pamphlet *On People's Wars*, is virtually a "do it yourself" manual which warns local Communists against expecting decisive material aid from the outside – meaning China – as differentiated from political and moral support.

It is important to note that the modest levels of Chinese support for revolutionary struggles abroad cannot be credited to constraints imposed by US policy. Since the creation of SEATO in 1954, unaligned Burma has suffered no greater subversive pressures

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from China than has aligned Thailand. The Malayan movement remains a troublesome nuisance in Sarawak as in the peninsula, but Peking seems no more willing to raise its level of support here than where US commitments are clear, as in the Philippines. Indonesia moved from near takeover by the Communists who headed the largest political movement, to massive massacres of all associated with the movement, without major intervention from Peking – or Washington – at any stage.

In sum, Chinese policy seems to be one of genuine self-restraint. The mixture of motives certainly includes theoretical considerations of revolutionary success being basically predicated on local conditions rather than external assistance. Prior needs for national defense against external threats as well as for mobilizing China's internal resources in pursuit of economic development constrain the will and the capacity to pursue revolutionary objectives abroad. Whatever the mixture and relative weight of motives, the consequence is to downgrade sharply the nature and extent of China's threat manifested through insurgent movements in Southeast Asia.

If the Chinese threat to Southeast Asia is marginal, so too are US interests in the area. The "domino" theory implies that all Southeast Asian states are equally vulnerable to Communist insurgency and that victory in one country will somehow spill over into neighboring areas. But as we have already seen, these societies vary greatly in their capacity to cope with insurgency. Second, even should China become emboldened by its growing strength and change its policy so drastically as to cow governments into submission either through satellite insurgencies or by direct military pressure, control over the region's resources will neither solve Peking's basic developmental problems nor transform China from a second to a first-class power. The analogy with Japan and World War II is bogus because, among other reasons, Japan's former maritime power has no counterpart in China. For Peking to extend its domination much beyond the mainland an entire navy must be developed, China's largest ships at present being only destroyers. To be sure, its growing submarine fleet can harass shipping lanes, but without supporting air and sea strength such an operation would be short-lived at best. Thus with or without Southeast Asia, China poses no foreseeable threat to the security of Japan, the Philippines, Indonesia, Australia and New Zealand, much less to the interests of the United States in the West and Southwest Pacific.

Exempted from this analysis, of course, are China's thermonuclear weapons. Peking's present TU-16 bomber fleet and imminent IRBMs will provide a capability of striking key targets in the arc of Asia from Japan to India, most of which lie within 1000 miles of mainland launch points. However, this takes us into entirely separate questions of Chinese vulnerability and sensitivity to American retaliatory capabilities. Without further elaboration, we can safely conclude that our deterrence, which has sufficed for the Soviet Union, should more than suffice for China.

Room at the Top?

The Blueing of America

by Peter L. Berger and Brigitte Berger

A sizable segment of the American intelligentsia has been on a kick of revolution talk for the last few years. Only very recently this talk was carried on in a predominantly Left mood, generating fantasies of political revolution colored red or black. The mood appears to have shifted somewhat. Now the talk has shifted to cultural revolution. Gentle grass is pushing up through the cement. It is "the kids," hair and all, who will be our salvation. But what the two types of revolution talk have in common is a sovereign disregard for the realities of technological society in general, and for the realities of class and power in America.

Only the most religious readers of leftist publications could ever believe that a political revolution from the Left had the slightest prospects in America. The so called black revolution is at a dividing fork, of which we shall speak in a moment. But as to the putatively green revolution, we think that the following will be its most probable result: It will accelerate social mobility in America, giving new opportunities for upward

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movement of lower-middle-class and working-class people, and in the process will change the ethnic and religious composition of the higher classes. Put differently: far from "greening" America, the alleged cultural revolution will serve to strengthen the vitality of the technological society against which it is directed, and will further the interests of precisely those social strata that are least touched by its currently celebrated transformations of consciousness.

The cultural revolution is not taking place in a social vacuum, but has a specific location in a society that is organized in terms of classes. The cadres of the revolution, not exclusively but predominantly, are the college-educated children of the upper-middle class. Ethnically, they tend to be Wasps and Jews. Religiously, the former tend to belong to the main-line Protestant denominations, rather than to the more fundamentalist or sectarian groups. The natural focus of the revolution is the campus (more precisely, the type of campus attended by this population), and such satellite communities as have been springing up on its fringes. In other words, the revolution is taking place, or minimally has its center, in a subculture of upper-middle-class youth.

The revolution has not created this subculture. Youth, as we know it today, is a product of technological and economic forces intimately tied to the dynamics of modern industrialism, as is the educational system within which the bulk of contemporary youth is concentrated for ever-longer periods of life. What is true in the current interpretations is that some quite dramatic transformations of consciousness have been taking place in this sociocultural ambience. These changes are too recent, and too much affected by distortive mass-media coverage, to allow for definitive description. It is difficult to say which manifestations are only transitory and which are intrinsic features likely to persist over time. Drugs are a case in point. So is the remarkable upsurge of interest in religion and the occult. However, one statement can be made with fair assurance: the cultural revolution has defined itself in diametric opposition to some of the basic values of bourgeois society, those values that since Max Weber have commonly been referred to as the "Protestant ethic" – discipline, achievement and faith in the onward-and-upward thrust of technological society. These same values are now perceived as "repression" and "hypocrisy," and the very promises of technological society are rejected as illusionary or downright immoral. A hedonistic ethic is proclaimed in opposition to the "Protestant" one, designed to "liberate" the individual from the bourgeois inhibitions in all areas of life, from sexuality through aesthetic experience to the manner in which careers are planned. Achievement is perceived as futility and "alienation," its ethos as "uptight" and, in the final analysis, inimical to life. Implied in all this is a radical aversion to capitalism and the class society that it has engendered, thus rendering the subculture open to leftist ideology of one kind or another.

Its radicalism, though, is much more far-reaching than that of ordinary, politically defined leftism. It is not simply in opposition to the particular form of technological society embodied in bourgeois capitalism but to the very idea of technological society. The rhetoric is Rousseauean rather than Jacobin, the imagery of salvation is intensely bucolic, the troops of the revolution are not the toiling masses of the Marxist prophecy but naked children of nature dancing to the tune of primitive drums.

When people produce a utopia of childhood it is a good idea to ask what their own childhood has been like. In this instance, the answer is not difficult. As Philippe Ariès has brilliantly shown, one of the major cultural accomplishments of the bourgeoisie has been the dramatic transformation of the structure of childhood, in theory as well as in practice. Coupled with the steep decline in child mortality and morbidity that has been brought about by modern medicine and nutrition, this transformation is one of the fundamental facts of modern society. A new childhood has come into being, probably happier than any previous one in human society. Its impact, however, must be seen in conjunction with another fundamental fact of modern society – namely, the increasing bureaucratization of all areas of social life. We would see the turmoil of youth today as being rooted in the clash between these two facts – paraphrasing Max Weber, in the clash between the new "spirit of childhood" and the "spirit of bureaucracy." However one may wish to judge the merits of either fact, both are probably here to stay. Logically enough, the clash almost invariably erupts when the graduates of the new childhood first encounter bureaucracy in their own life – to wit, in the educational system.

We cannot develop this explanation any further here, though we would like to point out that it is almost exactly the opposite of the Freudian interpretations of the same clash provided, for example, by Lewis Feuer or Bruno Bettelheim: Rebellious youth is not fighting against any fathers; on the contrary, it is outraged by the *absence* of parental figures and familial warmth in the bureaucratic institutions that envelop it. The point to stress, though, is that the transformation of childhood, born of the bourgeoisie, today affects nearly all classes in American society – *but it does not affect them equally.* As, for example, the work of John Seeley and Herbert Gans has demonstrated, there exist far-reaching differences between the childrearing practices of different classes. The transformation, and with it the new "spirit of childhood," developed most fully and most dramatically in the upper-middle class – that is, in the same social context that is presently evincing the manifestations of "greening."

To say this is in no way to engage in value judgments. If value judgments are called for, we would

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suggest calibrated ones. Very few human cultures (or subcultures) are either wholly admirable or wholly execrable, and the intellectuals who extoll this particular one are as much *terribles simplificateurs* as the politicians who anathematize it. In any case, our present purpose is to inquire into the probable consequences of the cultural changes in question.

The matrix of the green revolution has been a class-specific youth culture. By definition, this constitutes a biographical way station. Long-haired or not, *everyone*, alas, gets older. This indubitable biological fact has been used by exasperated over-thirty observers to support their hope that the new youth culture may be but a noisier version of the old American pattern of sowing wild oats. Very probably this is true for many young rebels, especially those who indulge in the external paraphernalia and gestures of the youth culture without fully entering into its new consciousness. But there is evidence that for an as yet unknown number, the way station is becoming a place of permanent settlement. For an apparently growing number there is a movement *from youth culture to counter-culture*. These are the ones who drop out permanently. For yet others, passage through the youth culture leaves, at any rate, certain permanent effects, not only in their private lives but in their occupational careers. As with the Puritanism that gave birth to the bourgeois culture of America, this movement too has its fully accredited saints and those who only venture upon a *halfway covenant*. The former, in grim righteousness, become sandal makers in Isla Vista. The latter at least repudiate the more obviously devilish careers within "the system" – namely, those in scientific technology, business and government that lead to positions of status and privilege in the society. They do not drop out, but at least they shift their majors – in the main, to the humanities and the social sciences, as we have recently seen in academic statistics.

The overall effects of all this will, obviously, depend on the magnitude of these changes. To gauge the effects, however, one will have to relate them to the class and occupational structures of the society. For those who become permanent residents of the counter-culture, and most probably for their children, the effect is one of downward social mobility. This need not be the case for the halfway greeners (at least as long as the society is ready to subsidize, in one way or another, poets, T-group leaders and humanistic sociologists). But they too will have been deflected from those occupational careers (in business, government, technology and science) that continue to lead to the higher positions in a modern society.

What we must keep in mind is that whatever cultural changes may be going on in this or that group, the personnel requirements of a technological society not only continue but actually expand. The notion that as a result of automation fewer and fewer people will be required to keep the technological society going, thus allowing the others to do their own thing and nevertheless enjoy the blessings of electricity, is in contradiction to all the known facts. Automation has resulted in changes in the occupational structure, displacing various categories of lower-skilled labor, but it has in no way reduced the number of people required to keep the society going. On the contrary, it has increased the requirements for scientific, technological and (last but not least) bureaucratic personnel. (The recent decline in science and engineering jobs is due to recession, and does not affect the long-term needs of the society.) The positions disdained by the aforementioned upper-middle-class individuals will therefore have to be filled by someone else. The upshot is simple: *There will be new "room at the top."*

Who is most likely to benefit from this sociological windfall? It will be the newly college-educated children of the lower-middle and working classes. To say this, we need not assume that they remain untouched by their contact with the youth culture during their school years. Their sexual mores, their aesthetic tastes, even their political opinions might become permanently altered as compared with those of their parents. We do assume, though, that they will, now as before, reject the anti-achievement ethos of the cultural revolution. They may take positions in intercourse that are frowned upon by Thomas Aquinas, they may continue to listen to hard rock on their hi-fi's and they may have fewer racial prejudices. But all these cultural acquisitions are, as it were, functionally irrelevant to making it in the technocracy. Very few of them will become sandal makers or farmers on communes in Vermont. We suspect that not too many more will become humanistic sociologists.

Precisely those classes that remain most untouched by what is considered to be the revolutionary tide in contemporary America face *new prospects of upward social mobility*. Thus, the "revolution" (hardly the word) is not at all where it seems to be, which should not surprise anyone. The very word *avant-garde* suggests that one ought to look behind it for what is to follow – and there is no point asking the *avant-gardistes*, whose eyes are steadfastly looking forward. Not even the Jacobins paid attention to the grubby tradesmen waiting to climb up over their shoulders.

COMING: The misuse of Executive power in foreign affairs — an analysis by Henry Steele Commager

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A technological society, given a climate of reasonable tolerance (mainly a function of affluence), can afford a sizable number of sandal makers. Its "knowledge industry" (to use Fritz Machlup's term) has a large "software" division, which can employ considerable quantities of English majors. And, of course, the educational system provides a major source of employment for nontechnocratic personnel. To this may be added the expanding fields of entertainment and therapy, in all their forms. All the same, quite different people are needed to occupy the society's command posts and to keep its engines running. These people will have to retain the essentials of the old "Protestant ethic" – discipline, achievement orientation, and also a measure of freedom from gnawing self-doubt. If such people are no longer available in one population reservoir, another reservoir will have to be tapped.

There is no reason to think that "the system" will be unable to make the necessary accommodations. If Yale should become hopelessly greened, Wall Street will get used to recruits from Fordham or Wichita State. Italians will have no trouble running the RAND Corporation, Baptists the space program. Political personnel will change in the wake of social mobility. It is quite possible that the White House may soon have its first Polish occupant (or, for that matter, its first Greek). Far from weakening the class system, these changes will greatly strengthen it, moving new talent upward and preventing rigidity at the top (though, probably, having little effect at the *very* top). Nor will either the mechanics or the rewards of social mobility change in any significant degree. A name on the door will still rate a Bigelow on the floor; only there will be fewer Wasp and fewer Jewish names. Whatever other troubles "the system" may face, from pollution to Russian ICBMs, it will not have to worry about its being brought to a standstill by the cultural revolution.

It is, of course, possible to conceive of such economic or political shocks to "the system" that technological society, as we have known it in America, might collapse, or at least seriously deteriorate. Ecological catastrophe on a broad scale, massive malfunction of the capitalist economy, or an escalation of terrorism and counter-terror would be cases in point. Despite the currently fashionable prophecies of doom for American society, we regard these eventualities as very unlikely. If any of them should take place after all, it goes without saying that the class system would stop operating in its present form. But whatever else would then be happening in America, it would *not* be the green revolution. In the even remoter eventuality of a socialist society in this country, we would know where to look for our greeners – in "rehabilitation camps," along the lines of Castro's Isle of Pines.

We have been assuming that the children of the lower-middle and working classes remain relatively unbitten by the "greening" bug – at least sufficiently unbitten so as not to interfere with their aspirations of mobility. If they too should drop out, there would be literally no one left to mind the technological store. But it is not very easy to envisage this. America falling back to the status of an underdeveloped society? Grass growing over the computers? A totalitarian society, in which the few remaining "uptight" people run the technocracy, while the rest just groove? Or could it be Mongolian ponies grazing on the White House lawn? Even if the great bulk of Americans were to become "beautiful people," however, the rest of the world is most unlikely to follow suit. So far in history, the uglies have regularly won out over the "beautiful people." They probably would again this time.

The evidence does not point in this direction. The data we have on the dynamics of class in a number of European countries would suggest that the American case may not be all that unique. Both England and western Germany have been undergoing changes in their class structures very similar to those projected by us, with new reservoirs of lower-middle-class and working-class populations supplying the personnel requirements of a technological society no longer served adequately by the old elites.

What we have described as a plausible scenario is not terribly dramatic, at least compared with the revolutionary visions that intellectuals so often thrive on. Nor are we dealing with a process unique in history. Vilfredo Pareto called this type of process the "circulation of elites." Pareto emphasized (rightly, we think) that such circulation is essential if a society is going to survive. In a Paretian perspective, much of the green revolution would have to be seen in terms of decadence (which, let us remark in passing, is not necessarily a value judgment – some very impressive flowerings of human creativity have been decadent in the same sociological sense).

But even Marx may, in a paradoxical manner, be proven right in the end. It may be the blue-collar masses that are, at last, coming into their own. "Power to the people!" – nothing less than that. The "class struggle" may be approaching a new phase, with the children of the working class victorious. These days we can see their banner all over the place. It is the American flag. In that perspective, the peace emblem is the old bourgeoisie, declining in the face of a more robust adversary. Robustness here refers, above all, to consciousness – not only to a continuing achievement ethos, but to a self-confidence not unduly worried by unending self-examination and by a basically intact faith in the possibilities of engineering reality. Again, it would not be the first time in history that a declining class leaned toward pacifism, as to the "beautiful things" of aesthetic experience. Seen by that class, of course, the blue-collar masses moving in suffer from considerable aesthetic deficiencies.

"Revolutionary" America? Perhaps, in a way. We may be on the eve of its blueing.

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Stanley Kauffmann on films

Spring Cleaning

A Severed Head (Columbia). There's one reason – in fact, there's really *only* one – to be glad that this picture was made: it shows us another side of Ian Holm. This fine actor was seen in the film of *The Bofors Gun* and on Broadway in Pinter's *The Homecoming*, both times radiating malevolence all the more powerful because it seemed so coldly rational. Now he's in a light comedy and, presto, he's a comedian of polish and charm. Small, neat, pathetic, strong. Funny.

Otherwise the film has *Why bother?* stencilled all over it from beginning to end. Iris Murdoch's novel was dramatized by her and J. B. Priestley (*there's* an oxymoronic duo) and bored me nearly stiff on the New York stage. The screenplay by Frederic Raphael redeems nothing and adds little. It's all just one more circle of amours, this time in London. A sleeps with B who then goes off with C who then teams up with A, who soon discovers D. . . . There is insufficient wit or character or social insight to justify these old motions. It is not Schnitzler nor Feydeau nor Coward. No revealing amorous counterpoint, just twittering roundelay.

A sort of resonance is attempted with a glum female Oxford don, whose castrating intent is spelled out with some (literal) swordplay. But instead of revealing anything significant about herself or others, she is only a "colorful" character. Claire Bloom plays her, and with the camera close and the scene-lengths short, she is able to sustain her command more credibly than in her current Ibsen appearance on Broadway.

Some of the casting is stupid. Lee Remick plays a pivotal role that requires a lovely, light, brittle comedienne. Miss Remick has neither the figure, the technique, nor, alas, the face. She is a pleasant, somewhat ungainly American lady striving like mad to sound Mayfair. Richard Attenborough plays a suave psychoanalyst. First, the role is written in stock 1930 cartoon-of-analysis style; this man keeps repeating the injunction to be "lucid and honest," like a dog with one trick, at the same time that everyone calls him a genius. Second, Attenborough has the look and sound of a man who has worked up from shop-boy to branch manager, not a Harley Street hotshot.

Jennie Linden, insufficiently appreciated as Glenda Jackson's sister in *Women in Love*, is crisp and pretty again here. Something of Jean Simmons with a touch of Elizabeth Allan. (Remember her in *A Tale of Two Cities* with Ronald Colman?)

Raphael and Dick Clement, the director, should be indicted under the new international law I propose, to ban Instant Reversals. Last line of a scene: A man says to his mistress, "I'm not going to introduce you to my wife, and that is that." Cut. First line of next scene: Husband introduces mistress to wife. Or maybe we don't need a new law to handle this matter, maybe the Bankruptcy Act will do.

But Holm is where the heart is.

Get Carter (MGM). I've skipped the last thirty or forty Michael Caine pictures, and thought it was time to look in on him again. I wish I hadn't. *Get Carter* should Get Stuffed.

Mike Hodges, the director, wrote the screenplay from a novel by Ted Lewis. Hodges is said to be a British TV whiz and, unfortunately, proves it. All the visual trickery in TV private-eye stuff is amplified here with the resources of film, and all the sadism and sexual tortuousness that the tube can only suggest is wallowed in. It would be merely disgusting, possibly even titillating, if the film were exciting, but it takes hours to get rolling and then only plods, so all the cold blood and hot beds seem especially dull. I've read praise of this picture that ranks it with Mick Jagger's *Performance*. I'll buy that.

It deals with a professional killer who goes up from London to Newcastle to revenge his brother's death and stumbles into a porno-film racket, among other things. Caine is no better here than before, but at least – in self-defense, I guess – he has mastered the knack of walking through roles in his sleep.

The Priest's Wife (Warner Bros). A few months ago Sophia Loren and Marcello Mastroianni appeared in a monstrosity called *Sunflower*, about Italians in Russia during World War II. Directed by Vittorio De Sica, it showed his senile willingness to accept any kind of sentimentality imposed by the producer Carlo Ponti. Still the De Sica touch with actors was evident sometimes. The moment when Loren and Mastroianni faced each other after years of separation was played with a truth that was a quite distinct entity from the scene that occasioned it.

No such luck in *The Priest's Wife*. Ponti has ladled on the goo again, and the director this time, Dino Risi, is swamped. This one is about a girl – something that Loren can no longer play – who has been knocked about from pillow to post. Her lover has deserted her, her singing job has fizzled. Near suicide, she calls a telephone priest. Eventually they meet. She flips; and almost flops him out of the Church.

The film never decides whether it's a comedy-romance with a new angle or a drama about a priest's encounter with love. I don't think this subject, of all subjects, can have it both ways. The picture goes *no* way, really, thus is basically exploitative and distasteful; and ends with canonical cop-out.

The dialogue is dubbed – badly, like most dubbing – and one gets tired of waiting for compensatory moments of acting that never come. Loren and Mastroianni have two of the most beautiful faces on the screen; he is a superb actor, she is a good instrument for the right director. But *The Priest's Wife* is a clerical error.

The Garden of Delights (Altura). In John Van Druten's *Voice of the Turtle*, the hero discusses his preferences in drama and says he dislikes plays in which people go mad. The heroine asks, "What other kinds of plays don't you like?" He replies, "Plays about men who are paralyzed from the waist down." The protagonist of *Garden* is not quite mad or paralyzed, but he is sufficiently daft and incapacitated to make the Van Druten prejudice live again.

Carlos Saura is a Spanish director whose previous film, *The Hunt*, I remember for two reasons: someone in it was reading Ray Bradbury and all of them were being allegorical. No Bradbury this time, but even more allegory, with things being implied

(Continued on page 33)

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Reed Whittemore: A Poetic Leader Without Guitar

The Life of Mayakovsky by Wiktor Woroszylski

(Orion Press; $15)

Thirty years or so of progressive annoyance with that dubious entity called modern poetry have persuaded me that modern poetry will never come to much so long as it keeps doing what it has been doing: finding the surrounding culture contemptible. Maybe the culture is contemptible, but that's not my point.

I agree that the nonmodern poets, the sweet things who have found good in the culture, haven't done well, but that's not my point either. They were not good poets. We have had good poets but pitifully little good poetry, because the good poets – I am thinking of English and American white poets – have had little to be affirmative about except their own poor battered selves.

To know why the culture and the poets have been apart – and all the good poets have thoroughly documented the reason for separation – is not enough. Knowledge will not help produce the poetry it would be healthful to have. But even less healthful is pretending that England and America have been living through a glorious age of poetry for the last half-century. English Departments and publishers may need to kid themselves into a bit of glory to keep the money flowing, but aside from the economics of the thing I think it is time for a little honesty. The poets my generation grew up reading – Eliot, Yeats, Pound, Stevens and so on – and the poets who started the new poetry of the sixties – Ginsberg, Ferlinghetti, Corso and so on – are alike in their incapacity to live with the culture. Eliot's incapacity and Ginsberg's incapacity are different, and of course their poetry is different; but they are both of the hate-the-culture party, and so are *all* the important moderns, old and new, of no matter what aesthetic persuasion. The role of serious modern western literature has persistently been, except in Communist countries, the role of the dissident. And dissidence, though it may be necessary, does not produce the poetry the world pants for.

The alienation will continue. My guess is it will deepen. But poetry – and literature in general – will not be, can never be, the better for it. We have an enormous poetry machine, an enormous literary machine, endlessly spewing clinkers – and the cause is clear: the machine is endlessly committed to refusing to serve any central social cause, committed to a variety of salvations of the self, a wide assortment of ye olde capitalist anarcho-individualist alternatives to what V. L. Parrington a long time ago called (and I hated him for it) literature of the mainstream.

Nobody thinks of Parrington any more. Or MacLeish. They are the central Kulch side of life that Western intellectuals, remembering many failures, are bred up to dismiss. And of course nobody *ever* has thought seriously of Washington or City Hall or any possible central administrative entity as a way to bringing together the Kulch. Nobody, that is, who can be said to be a significant shaping spirit in literature.

As an American, one does not I think understand Mayakovsky's mad gyrations as a Soviet enthusiast and revolution-booster without drawing certain analogies between the Russian and American experience. So let me be personal and describe my private experience with the Kulch, especially Washington. Washington shares the look of Moscow and the Party in that it has always been a big part of the mass cultural thing the American literary intellectual can't stand. Starting with Thoreau, or even earlier, 19th century intellectuals were appalled by Washington, but it was Henry Adams who first solidly elaborated upon the intellectuals' complaint. Adams was a snob about Washington, and Washington was nearly as bad then as it is now: it was all rhetoric and no mind, it was power and emptiness, it wasn't human, it was (and is) something to be snobbish about.

My pre-World-War-II college generation took in the Thoreau-Adams views of bureaucracy and Washington. The views were part of our classroom education in the past, and important to us; but we were more nearly affected by what the thirties depression had done to Washington. It had produced the New Deal and the new contempt for Washington manifested by the likes of my FDR-hating physician father, who sat at home with high blood pressure created by the horrors of a save-the-world federal government. My father didn't understand the modern-poetry kick I went on, and he remained a good Book-of-the-Month-Club person as I developed into a snob about best sellers and had my own brief theoretical love affair with Washington; yet he could be kind and sympathetic about my poetry, my little magazines, my Ezra Pound – no problem there. He remained unappeasable only by Washinton; and when and if I ever displayed the slightest affection for FDR he went silent. He did want us to win the war, but otherwise the whole national scene remained an abomination for him. The oddity is that he and my modern-poetry friends, whom he couldn't understand, were in agreement: Washington was the end.

That Washington was the end I had forgotten when I came to it as poetry consultant for the Library of Congress in 1964. I had been holed away in Minnesota for two decades, where the Cowles newspapers and modern literature and sheer prairie had kept me well insulated from Washington; but I needed only a week or two at the Library to sense the enormity of the spiritual clash between the Library's poetry post and the Feds surrounding it. I have never been treated so well, never been made so much of as a poet as I was that year at the Library, but the cause was not I; the cause was the post. Nobody, in Washington or out, has ever quite believed that post. Washington is not supposed to have poets, certainly not an official poet; the whole notion is ridiculous. Yet, courtesy of Gertrude Clarke Whittall, Washington keeps having one official poet. I know of no better post in the world than the Library of Congress post to sense the foreignness of Washington from the literary sensibility, a foreigness that is the foreignness of all bureaucracy, all big government, all large-scale non-individualist thought from whatever it is that the Thoreaus, Eliots, Orwells,

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Ginsbergs, Mailers, even Beatles stand for. I lived for a year in Washington dazed by the inexplicable pleasantness of the Library post, then returned to Washington a year later to be properly the outsider that Washington demands artists be. That was 1966.

But in 1966 the peace movement was strong and the intellectuals were moving in on Washington from all over, and especially from NY, to set the government straight. Sitting in Washington as a new literary native I saw for the first time with my own eyes the magnitude of the contempt for Washington these visitors had. Beside their outside I felt inside. They thought *nobody* could live in Washington and not be tainted.

How much of American utopian life has in its heart a march on Washington. And how different has been the Russian experience, with its perhaps misplaced but nonetheless real faith in the central thing that is Moscow. At first sight it is thus the remoteness of the Mayakovsky experience from the American experience that is striking. In our country Mayakovsky would have been a New York or Hollywood figure, a success story in the individualist vein like Chaplin (or perhaps somebody more mercantile – Bob Hope? – I can't find an appropriate entrepreneur-*artiste*) – but in his own country Mayakovsky became rapidly an agent of the revolutionary bureaucracy, a soldier in the mainstream that was Moscow. He would have made a grand poetry consultant at the L of C.

He was one of the prime exhibitionists of all time. Wherever he was the center of the world was. That he should have been a champion of socialist realism is a laugh, but he was that too. He was also a futurist – which at the time of World War I was like being a surrealist, something way out and disorderly. And he was insistently central at the same time. Amazing. He began being a poet by being a 15-year-old rebel, jailed for printing revolutionary material. His poetry itself was a sort of afterthought to his personality (in his poet-as-person get-up he is insistently reminiscent of our guitar poets). In 1913 – he was by then 18 – he persuaded his mother to sew him up a brightly striped tunic, and the tunic demonstrably made him a poet before he opened his mouth (he was an extraordinary physical presence anyway – tall, strong, handsome, fierce, funny), and the tunic therefore became, just as the revolution itself began to take shape, a fuzzy symbol of rebellion, futurism, whatall. Soon he was making with the fame and money by circulating in his tunic, reading poems, and being Mayakovsky. Wherever he was he was at home, and a leader. By the age of 24 he was an old pro as a poet, a film actor and producer (he rewrote a Jack London story into a "scenario about a Russian poet who overcomes all obstacles in his fight against conservative tastes and gains fame and riches") and a fixture as a revolutionary. He was and he was not an establishment figure; he was and was not of the new people's government. At "The Poet's Cafe" in 1918 he introduced the People's Commissar for Education, who thereupon attacked the futurists for their anarcho-individualism but praised Mayakovsky. Maybe, thought the commissar, Mayakovsky could "attract the masses and tinge futurism with an element of popular art," as other futurists could not; yet Mayakovsky was also, in the commissar's mind, obviously a bit of a freak. He was that in the minds of the futurists too.

In the early years of the revolution Mayakovsky was apparently a popular, certainly a ubiquitous performer, who kept his ties with the anarchistic, egocentric futurists, yet also sold himself as a worker and a propagandist for the working class (he did posters as well as instant epic poems); he was full of "I" but he was also tired of the "trifles" of private loving and suffering that he had written about in the near past:

> Comrades,
> give us a new form of art –
> an art
> that will pull the republic out of the mud
> ("Order #2 to the Army of the Arts.")

In 1918 one Nikolai Punin said of him, in a review: "Mayakovsky, after all his street rhetoric, has now placed himself in a square like a monument and, as the first among futurist poets, has clearly said 'we.' At that moment he ceased to be a romantic and became a classic."

Maybe. But he was a romantic again the next week. Mayakovsky built friends and enemies, and identified with changing movements and causes, with great casualness; but he remained throughout his changes a fixed public symbol, something to talk about rather than someone to know, a dependable undependable whom everyone could use as an instance of something. Even Lenin could profitably refer to him (1922):

> Yesterday I came across a poem by *Mayakovsky* on a political theme. I do not count myself among the admirers of his poetic talent, though I fully admit my lack of competence in that sphere. But it is a long time since I have felt so satisfied from a political and administrative point of view. In that poem, the poet utterly derides and mocks the Communists because they confer and debate all the time. I do not know whether it is good poetry, but I promise you he is absolutely right from a political point of view. . . .

As the revolution took hold and the inexorable issues of the individual's place in the hungry utopia sharpened, Mayakovsky's own place, I gather, grew less sharp. He was born, as so many commentators observed, to revolution, he was at home with it the moment it was mentioned; so there was never any problem in his becoming some sort of leader in it, with or without guitar. If he had been at the Library of Congress it would have been marvelous; he would have held poetry readings in the parking lot of the Capitol rather than across the street in the Library's staid Coolidge Auditorium. He would have inspired cab drivers; he would have thrown confetti at conservative southern congressmen and at the same time been recognized as part of the government machine. Yet as bureaucracy grew to define itself in Moscow Mayakovsky, despite his enormous will to be an artistic prostitute and to stand for anything whatever so long as it was the people's wish, came to feel more and more lonely. He had always, I gather, been somebody delightfully optimistic about democracy on a vast stage in front of thousands, who wouldn't speak to his neighbor; and he had always been able to produce fuzzy public statements in verse by the yard, which did not really get to the quick of his own or anybody else's character – broad brush strokes of cartoonist, publicist, poster artist – and he had therefore depended for success upon nobody inspecting his work too closely. In the twenties, both sides moved in on him. Commissars

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kept seeing through to his undoubted anarchism, artists kept seeing his incurable opportunism – and so the game was up; he sickened and eventually committed suicide. Yet even trying to straddle the thing, as he did, is a sort of lesson to those of us who came later. The L of C would have been the place for it.

Woroszylski's volume is not really a biography. It's a compendium of remarks, mostly public remarks, about the post. It does not take us behind the scenes, behind the dramatic mask that Mayakovsky wore, and so we are left with precisely the kind of emptiness at the center that perhaps the Soviet experiment has ultimately demanded of its artists. That emptiness might well have been the price we would have paid for nondissidence in our arts over here, had we gone the way of Russia. And yet there is something about Mayakovsky's career that is not at all foreign to the American way of art. We have been suckers for a variety of public artists, both sentimental (like McKuen) and futurist (like Warhol), and Mayakovsky had a bit of both these in himself. We have desperately wanted a powerfully built yea-sayer, with or without beard, for a national poet, and in his absence (Frost never quite made it; he was too soft-spoken and finally too negative, at one with all the other dissidents) we have had to settle for nonpoets like Billy Graham. Somehow literature itself has always failed us; the yea-sayers have had to wander off into music and religion.

Not only could we use a Mayakovsky, but we could use the nonliterary literary criticism that surrounded him. Our literary criticism has been impoverished by its snobbishness; we now have as a result the most primitive kind of lit crit growing up among our radicals, who are having to do the socialist thing all over as if there were no precedents, having to do it over because what we have left them they simply don't understand. How do you apply Brooks and Warren to Bob Dylan? Our younger set with its new vision of poetry as a street art – and fiction as something in the drug bag – may find Mayakovsky and his critics more useful than our conventional canons of criticism. They may even be ripe for a bit of indoctrination in the ways of bureaucracy, rather than those of Greenwich Village. I mean criticism in this vein:

– The past seven years of socialist construction are poorly reflected in the poem. [a 1927 poem by Mayakovsky called "Good"]
– The New Economic Policy . . . demands that we praise the joy of life, the fascination of the arduous march toward communism.
– If you want to know, the work of art of the highest order today is political propaganda.

This sort of comment would be mixed in with the lovely immensities of the country existing beyond the bureaucracy, beyond even New York; it would be a manifestation of the relevance business, but built into a tradition of criticism rather than all uppety fresh.

New York publishers are giving us a new run on Mayakovsky. Besides the book reviewed here there is a reissue of *The Bedbug and Selected Poems*, edited by Patricia Blake, World Publishing, $6.95; plus *How Are Verses Made?* (Grossman, $3.95 – reviewed in the January 16, 1971 issue of *NR*). Nobel prize-winner Solzhenitsyn is also being pushed; *For the Good of the Cause* was reissued last winter by Praeger, and two new biographies as well as a collection of stories and poems will appear this spring and summer. Such publications are late in coming. We need to understand socialist realism more than we do, and to live with our "new" criticism less than we do – not to be good socialists but to put the poet back with the hicks where he (sometimes) belongs, and to look again at the possibility, however faint, of social and institutional affirmation as a part of the literary scheme of things.

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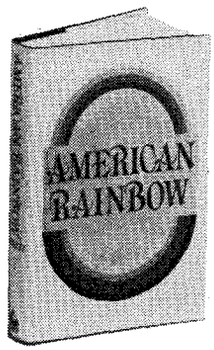

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David Littlejohn: How Hard to Be a German

Letters of Thomas Mann, 1889-1955
Selected and Translated by Richard and Clara Winston

(Knopf; $17.50)

The letters of Thomas Mann in this selection seem to have, on the whole, remarkably little to do with his creative activity, his career as a novelist. They evoke instead a lifetime of public and private polemic, of never-ending political controversy. But in the end it is not easy to decide which was the more important – the artist's life, represented by the great fictional works, or the public man's life represented here.

The "political" cast of this collection is partly due to the exaggerated emphasis it gives to Mann's most determinedly public years, when his correspondence was at its busiest, and when his letters – a best-selling Nobel laureate's, after all, often on the most heated questions of the day – were most likely to be saved. But he is a Nobel laureate for over two-thirds of this book; to put it another way, he is sixty years old by the time the book is one-third over. Three hundred of its 690 pages are given to the 12 years of his Southern California exile, when he felt compelled to assume his most active and intransigent political role.

The collection does reveal a good deal else, a good deal that is literary, intimate, charming, and wise: the Reflections (as Mann entitled a World War I essay he was later to recant) of a Non-Political Man. The letters allow us to trace the objective origins of several of Mann's fictional works, and the intricate, sometimes severely strained relations of the large, almost unbelievably prodigious Mann family. They contain Mann's candid observations on many people, places, books, ideas, and events, and give us at least a sampling of the bizarre correspondence Great Men are expected to maintain – patient replies to tedious fans, tactful refusals, answers to hate-mail, exchanges with other Olympians, advice to would-be suicides or poets, or to morally confused fellow Germans.

This last category suggests the primary burden of Mann's public career. On the evidence of these letters alone, he begins to seem a man who spent most of his thinking hours agonizing over questions of public ethics, and in particular over the problem of *how to be a German* in the middle third of the twentieth century.

"It is not easy to be a German," he wrote in the 1914 *Reflections*, "not as comfortable as being an Englishman or a Frenchman. . . . There is something deep and irrational in the German soul which presents it to more superficial people as disturbing, savage, and repulsive." And the next forty years were hardly of a sort to change his mind. "We poor Germans!" he lamented in 1952. "No one really likes us. . . . Everything German is unspeakably unpopular, that is clear, and it is a great *malheur* to be a German writer, an insuperable handicap."

That he was himself doomed to remain "German" in some radical and inalienable way he seems to have accepted (or insisted) from the start – even during the years when he was accused by many Germans of criminally "unGerman Activities." His Germanness was in great part a matter of language, memories, cultural ties – essential capital for a writer. Perhaps the greatest loss of his American years was that of his German-speaking readers. ("How I envy music for needing no translation . . . the 1,800 German copies [of the last *Joseph* volume] in America give me more pleasure than the 200,000 in English.")

But beyond that, he seemed to feel compelled to define and assert *his* Germanness in relation to the domestic and foreign policies of his nation's rulers. At first this was easy. We Germans *are* glorious and superior, he wrote in 1914, "the world-people of the spirit." The "great tradition" of Germanism ran from Luther to Bismarck to Nietzsche, to the Kaiser's troops in "this great, fundamentally

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decent, and in fact stirring people's war."

This conviction was to waver very soon. Before World War I was half over, he began to wonder if Germany was in fact "one" in any politically viable sense. (Convinced, after World War II, that his people were politically hopeless, he made innumerable German enemies by proposing something like a return to the country's atomized, pre-Bismarckian state.) From then on Mann adopted the singular policy of defining "true" Germanism in terms of his own personal and changing ideals. "Where I am there is Germany," he is reported as having said on his arrival in the United States in 1938; and he defended his adoption of American citizenship six years later as the best possible "shelter" for "my kind of Germanism." Authentic, or higher Germanism, he decided, was now represented better by European, cosmopolitan, antinationalist heroes like Goethe (or Thomas Mann) than by Luther or Bismarck; by 1925, in fact, events in his home town of Munich had led him to speculate that such figures might represent the *worst* self of Germany, "which (again confidentially in a personal letter) is always but three steps from barbarism, insofar as it is not plumb in the middle of barbarism."

Much of Mann's public role in the thirties and forties as the representative Good German may have been the price he felt obliged to pay for the relative comfort and security of his Californian exile. Regarded by some Americans as an enemy alien, and by many Germans – Nazi and anti-Nazi – as a traitor, he performed prodigies of self-justification: BBC propaganda talks, pro-Allied essays and lectures ("my democratic Sunday sermons"), arduous efforts on behalf of German refugees – all recorded here. There can be no doubting his deep and passionate hatred of Hitler: "Ah, that vicious toad – when will somebody trample on its head?" In fact, a doctrinaire and absolute anti-Hitlerism frequently served as the sole standard of his judgments and endeavors in the years before and through the war. He cut dead lukewarm friends and sentimental Old German emigrés; he aligned himself with militant, Hitler-hating democrats like Mumford and MacLeish; he reminded his apolitical friend Hesse that "Refusal is politics, too; it is a political act on the side of the evil cause." "*Je fais la guerre*," he warned one pacific acquaintance. "Who is not for me is against me."

No one could pretend that any of this activity or emotion was merely the protective cover for a German in wartime America. A gentleman of Mann's humanist and elitist temper could only be expected to find Hitler and Hitlerism unspeakably vile. (In fact, so natural did the posture of intransigent hatred become that he kept it up *after* the war, switching his target to red-baiting America: at some loss to his moral equilibrium. To see McCarthy and Mundt as American Hitlers is to devalue somewhat one's earlier honest hatred of the original.) But Mann tried, during part of his exile, to defend "Germany" to Americans – that is, the idea of Germany, his kind of Germany – by the "handful of evil men" theory. And I do believe *that* defense to have been strategic rhetoric. "The arson and the campaign against the Jews are exclusively the work of the rulers. . . . German culture in music, art, and intellectual life was and remains one of the richest and most important in the world."

More and more, Mann seems in fact to have conceived of his homeland as *fundamentally* rotten – or, in the opinion of some of his German critics, to have projected his own deep-lying internal craving for barbarism and morbidity onto his native land. Nazism "has century-old roots in German life itself."

> . . . *the good old Germany of culture and learning* is more or less an American fiction, and . . . one would have to drive pretty far upstream along the course of German history before one found no sign of that spirit which today has reached the last degree of baseness and threatens to barbarize and enslave the world.

Luther, Fichte, Hegel, Wagner, Schopenhauer, Nietzsche are all now suspect and tainted – like his own Adrian Leverkuhn, German geniuses through a pact with Hell.

At best, Mann's responses to Nazism are hard, hot, and brilliant, a compound of irrefutable lucidity and passionate disgust. After the war, he steps wilfully and surely through great thickets of moral confusion (this or that man's guilt, communism vs. fascism), and writes exemplary, scrupu-

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lous letters of Solomon-like judgment, in most cases convincingly fair.

But what has all this to do with *The Magic Mountain, Death in Venice, Doctor Faustus?*

Very little. Mann's unique (and sometimes indigestible) quality as a novelist derives from his having been at least as much a safe, settled bourgeois citizen – this is critical commonplace – as he was a pathological dark dreamer. The strange and uneasy nature of his fictions results from the way in which their professorial cerebration, their super-detailed realism, their almost too-obvious design and control combine with the most grotesquely irrational perversions, with appeals and seductions as "barbaric" as all the ills and evils he claimed to detect and denounce in the German temper. In his most successfully realized works – *Death in Venice, Doctor Faustus* – the tension between these poles is something intense and irresolvable.

The 540 letters in this collection cluster almost exclusively about the right-hand pole, the cerebral, bourgeois, political. They reveal Mann the lecturer, the polemicist, the paterfamilias, the professor-*manque*, the novelist as critic-battler and royalty-counter, the moral judge and Man of Letters. The picture that emerges is one of a hard, unique, difficult life, stiff with integrity, filled with conscious moral behavior and righteousness – which is a different thing from self-righteousness, something Mann tried very hard to avoid. It is awesome, but perhaps not imitable or even loveable. The man who is right all the time may end up being very lonely. "What can possibly be the source of the hatred I inspire in a good many fellows?" It reflects very vividly the depth and complexity of the ethical dimension of Western politics between 1914 and 1955.

What these letters do *not* reveal is the deep and private source of all that is still so horribly appealing in the best of Mann's fictions: the inner sickness or imbalance, the ravaging erotic confusion that makes his fictional works, at best, so much richer, more seductive, more humanly complex than all his speeches and lectures, than his decent, public, quasi-professorial life. With very rare exceptions – a few early letters, and especially one to Carl Maria Weber of July 4, 1920 bear witness to a harrowing eroticism he may have married to *escape* – the "indecent" element is kept rigorously out of at least this collection of his correspondence.

But I cannot easily decide that, in Mann's case, it is the "art," the unreason that matters most – or even pretend that it can be separated from the hard, direct, rational-humanist integrity of this heroic "Good German's" career. Because his national/personal doom suited him so uniquely to do so, Thomas Mann was to become the one great twentieth century writer who wrote directly *about* the twentieth century – which has made it impossible for me, at least, to see his life and his art as anything but exactly in balance.

Gerald W. Johnson: Hardworking Gadfly

Polemics & Prophecies 1967-1970 by I. F. Stone

(Random House; $10)

Few will dispute the assertion that I. F. Stone is the most efficient political gadfly now on the wing in the United States, but there is far less general appreciation of his other function, that of the incredibly industrious researcher. Yet those who have read him consistently are at least somewhat aware that, adept as he is with the stinging phrase – Reagan, "the TV Tarzan of Republican politicos"; the Rev. Billy Graham, "a favorite spiritual back-scratcher of the pious rich"; or "a certain moral imbecility marks all ethocentric movements" – yet what draws blood is not what he says, but what he quotes.

He is capable of Herculean labor. The man actually reads, or at least skims, the *Congressional Record*, a task the thought of which is enough to make the average newspaper man turn green and start clamoring for a job in the advertising department. In addition he has the nondescript, not to say mystic, faculty of the top-flight newshound – when a dozen committee hearings are scheduled for the same hour on the same day, eleven of which will produce each a story worth a stick – 28 lines – of type, Stone can sniff out the one that will produce something worth a column and a half. He can't give it so much, but he can, and does, extract from the transcript and present in a box the paragraph that exposes brilliantly the fatuity of the whole proceeding.

The new book presents a collection of articles from his *Weekly* – now *Bi-Weekly* – from 1967 to 1970, plus a few that he contributed to the *New York Review of Books*. To readers unfamiliar with Stone, it may be recommended as an excellent introduction, but to the 60,000 who are his consistent followers the first third of the volume will seem badly dated.

Yet even Stone's most ardent followers may find two features of the book thought-provoking, if not exactly soothing. One is precisely the staleness of the first few chapters. They were written in 1967 and deal with the men around Lyndon B. Johnson and the issues with which they struggled. But the terrific acceleration of the historical process has already made them as academic as a character sketch of Richard Olney, Cleveland's secretary of state, and his way of handling the Venezuelan boundary dispute. This, after only four years, provokes melancholy speculation on how dead will be Nixon and Muskie, Fulbright and Laird, in 1975.

The other is, of all things, a book review! But it is not a review *a la* Virginia Kirkus, but one more in the manner of the *Edinburgh Review* when Lord Jeffrey reigned in its editorial office, and a book was the excuse for a philosophical essay. Jean Paul Sartre, appreciating the sinister significance for all the world of the Arab-Israeli conflict, and despairing of making any sense of the lunatic manifestoes on both sides, sought out two groups of philosophers, or at least of highly intelligent men, one consisting of Arabs, both Christian and Moslem, the other of Jews, both Zionist and non-Zionist, and asked from each an article discussing the problem from his own point of view. The result was the book that furnished the basis of Stone's essay called "Holy War."

Stone admits that he undertook the task with some trepidation. As a Jew himself – although not an Israeli – he was conscious of a certain bias, and therefore leaned backward in his effort to summarize the Arabian point of view accurately. Naturally, this drew fire from the lunatic fringe of the

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Zionists, but to Gentiles and, no doubt, to level-headed Jews, it is highly informative, if not encouraging.

For this affair shows every aspect of a Holy War, a *Jehad*, a Crusade, or whatever else you choose to call a battle of metaphysicians in which realism is heresy to both sides. The one gleam of light that Stone perceived is the fact that the duration of the quarrel has alarmed both the United States and Russia, neither of whom has a stake in the Middle East that is worth the risk of a collison of nuclear powers. Since Sartre's book was published, in 1969, that gleam has grown appreciably brighter. This encourages the hope that the book may eventually justify the whole of its title. Polemics it certainly is, and prophecy we must wish that it may prove to be.

Notable

Marmalade Me
by Jill Johnston

(Dutton; $8.95)

Jill Johnston is a good reporter when she wants to be, which is not often. She can even be lucid about what John Cage is doing, which is more than John Cage can be. But as a regular reporter on the dance and other arts for the *Village Voice* she long ago decided to pass on her vision of things, that is, not be a reporter but an artist, a transcendental bug zooming around and over The Scene. She even decided to make like James Joyce with the words. In an introduction to this volume Gregory Battcock asserts that "Johnston's work . . . represents a radical departure from existing notions concerning the role and function of art criticism." Maybe so; but does the departure have to be in the direction of the arrogantly propounded values of an anarchaic self always desperately confronting the latest and the most? Answer: apparently.

The Goodbye People
by Gavin Lambert

(Simon & Schuster; $5.95)

The goodbye people make connections with our narrator erratically. When they are present they are intimate; then suddenly they are not present, and not to be found. One of them merely loans the narrator an occasional evening and vanishes into a night-and-day-guarded ivory tower; another, an unevenly intense homosexual, moves in with the narrator for a long stay but then leaves without notice for parts unknown; and a third, a girl connected by a dream with a long-missing movie idol, walks off obscurely into the middle distance in cahoots with the idol. Gavin Lambert is a master of what used to be called understatement, and he brings to life a mash of unpromising Californian new-world material. This is a real sleeper – well-perceived, well-done, hard-to-put-down.

The End of the Road
by John M. Allegro

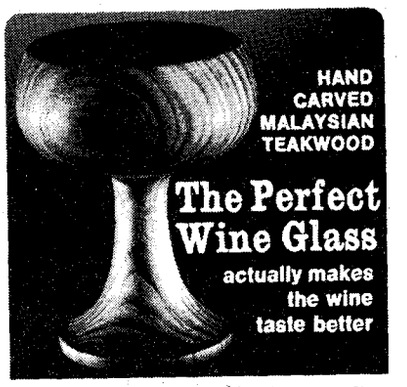
(Dial; $5.95)

Mr. Allegro received considerable reviewing attention last year by announcing, in a volume entitled *The Sacred Mushroom and The Cross*, that Christianity was a sort of psychedelic fertility myth, misunderstood all these centuries. Now he repeats that discovery and goes on to advise what to do now that the faith is no more. There's a kind of arrogance about both the discoveries and the advice that would have seemed abominable a few years ago but now seems merely normal. Popularizers have replaced scholars and thinkers so thoroughly that ordinary people now never even hear of the latter. Which does not improve the quality of Mr. Allegro's product. Maybe a conscientious reviewing agency – like *Mad*? – should issue warning stickers for such books. In the meantime, our apologies for mentioning this one – occasionally something has to be said.

Notes on Contributors

David Littlejohn, *who teaches at Berkeley, is the editor of* The André Gide Reader *(due out in May) and* Gide: A Collection of Critical Essays. Wolf Von Eckhardt, *a former* NR *contributing editor, is an architectural critic for* The Washington Post.

Figures of Light by Stanley Kauffmann, film and theater editor of NR, has just been published by Harper & Row ($8.95). Much of the book first appeared in *The New Republic*.



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The Arts

The Anti-City Beautiful Movement

Whatever the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, our national cultural center, may accomplish for our national culture, it is less than a boon for Washington's urban environment. Neither are most of the other roughly 180 arts centers that have been built in American cities during the past decade.

This is not to say, as some would have it, that new cultural buildings are an irrelevant luxury that corrupts culture, and that cities should not indulge in. True, a good many of the new theaters and concert halls – in Indianapolis, St. Paul, San Antonio, Little Rock and Vancouver, for instance – are dark for as much as half of the year. The new Atlanta Arts Center is in trouble and that means trouble for the performing arts in that city. A lavish new frame does not improve the picture. Washington's Arena Stage offered more exciting theater in an old beer brewery than in its handsome new building. Boston, as Martin Mayer points out in a recent Twentieth Century Fund study, "created a nationally important opera company in the ambience of a movie theater; the New York City Ballet reached international stature in the preposterous surroundings of the old Mecca Temple" and "both the Pittsburgh and Minnesota orchestras have built extraordinary ensembles in monstrously unsuitable auditoriums."

But that is hardly an argument against building suitable new auditoriums. It is a shame that many large American cities still lack adequate facilities for symphony concerts and drama, let alone opera and ballet. And while it is obviously true that scarce money for the arts should first of all be spent on building audiences for artists, it is also true that both the money and the audiences are more easily attracted to new buildings.

Besides, our cities need them. They need new glamor and excitement, new focal points, occasions for festive beauty and bright lights. New housing, office buildings and stores help lift the tax base. We also need civic buildings to lift the spirit. Theaters, concert halls and opera houses are as important to a city's vitality and livability as museums, sport stadiums and parks.

The trouble, then, is not with the recent rash of cultural buildings (in the past few years the national rate of investment in physical plant has risen to more than $200 million a year, over two-thirds of the total public and private contribution to performing arts institutions). The trouble seems to me to be that so many of our cities have packaged their culture into single monmental, institutional and aseptic cultural centers. These monuments, as Martin Mayer puts it, "may symbolize not the majesty of the arts but their increasing isolation." They are a legacy of the basically anti-city City Beautiful movement which, early in this century, saw civic virtue only in monumental public buildings amidst lonely parks, apart from the noise and bustle of city life.

The Kennedy Center, which is scheduled to open this fall, epitomizes this anti-urban planning. It consists of a 2800-seat concert hall, a 2300-seat theater for opera, dance and musical comedy, and a 1550-seat theater for drama and musicals – three houses which might have served as decisive catalysts to bring decaying downtown Washington to life again with new restaurants, hotels, stores and elegance. Millions are to be spent to give Pennsylvania Avenue, between the Capitol and the White House some dignity and perhaps even grandeur. But this is an area where private investors fear to tread. So all we will probably get is more pompous federal offices and an avenue that may be grand but that will also be dead at night after the office workers go home.

Downtown theater and opera-goers could park in garages that the stores and offices would fill during the day. Many of them could use the subway, which is now under construction. Placed close to the museums on the Mall, three separate buildings would have helped turn all of downtown Washington into a cultural center. And culture would have been equally accessible to people of all income groups, as all the attractions and amenities should be in the capital of a democracy.

But Congress provided a parcel of land along the Potomac, remote from the inner city and hemmed in by ugly freeways and the not much prettier Watergate luxury apartments. The three auditoriums, furthermore, were put into one lily-white marble box that is difficult to get to. A lot of money had to be spent on parking facilities for 1600 cars, which may be woefully insufficient. And still more money had to be spent on insulating the building against the racket of jets flying into nearby National Airport. Many people have warned against all this, but Roger Stevens, the guiding spirit of the center, backed by President Kennedy, stubbornly stuck to this location. The center's architect, Edward Durell Stone, also seemed enamored of the site and proclaimed that an opera house should not be regarded as an urban renewal project.

Why not? That is precisely what Baron Haussmann's Paris opera and Robert Moses' New York Lincoln Center and, for that matter, most downtown arts centers are. And what is wrong with the Lincoln Center and the Los Angeles Music Center and all the rest, urbanistically speaking, is not that they are downtown, trying to buoy some new economic and visual vitality, but that they refuse to become really part of downtown. Grouping arts buildings into a center, to be sure, has some managerial advantages (there is only one heating bill and that sort of thing) and offers a nice opportunity for controlled urban design. You can create a magnificent, nicely paved plaza, a great outdoor space with fountains and outdoor cafes, perched up there on a parking garage; and both New York and Los Angeles brought that off very well. But both these centers are almost arrogantly aloof. They look institutional and seem, somehow, sanitized against the germs that it takes to germinate an urban culture. And both create magnificent traffic jams when they empty out.

I don't think there will be many more cultural centers. In the 1970s, it ap-

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pears, we will take culture in smaller, more humble doses and we will spread its blessings and buildings around the city, closer to where the people are. Baltimore's Mechanic Theater is an example. Designed by John Johansen, this relatively small but assertive building is an integral part of the urban scene, the office and apartment skyscrapers, shops, restaurants, traffic, and pedestrian plazas and walkways of Charles Center. There are shops in the building. There is nothing precious about it.

And as planners and architects think more about the city, not in abstract monumental terms, but as an environment for people and creative expression, they also think about the city's identity and tradition, about the need to preserve its old buildings and sense of place. There will be smaller theaters and auditoriums to provide, in a human way the face-to-face intimacy of our old community life. More and more historic buildings will be converted.

Joseph Papp led the way, four or five years back, when he converted the old Astor Library on Lafayette Street into the New York Shakespeare Festival's Anspacher Theater – one of the country's finest architectural and cultural glories.

In Baltimore, an obsolete railroad station now serves as a small arts center. The Newark Community Center of the Arts was originally a carriage house. There are many other such new places in old spaces. It seems part of the future of the performing arts in America to help save our past.

Wolf Von Eckardt

Kauffmann, *from page 24*

like crazy – and I mean crazy – about capitalism and class and impotence and sexuality and Spain and Europe and God and, probably, Einstein's Unified Field Theory.

The scion of an immensely wealthy family has been injured in a car crash and now has difficulty remembering, speaking, and writing. He's the only one who knows the number of a secret Swiss bank account, for the use of which they also need his signature; and the whole family is busily trying to restore his powers so that they can get their mitts on the money. Why other avenues to that account aren't available to a family of their experience and resource, is not made clear.

It's all sententious, with shots laboriously "well" composed and oppressively "well" photographed. The effect is as of Buñuel strangled with velour. Once the ground is established, there is not a trope that is unpredictable – with a single exception. I liked a scene in which the maimed man goes out in a rowboat with his oversolicitous wife and vainly tries to push her into the water, muttering "An American Tragedy" over and over.

In the main, however, this is a prime sample of the delusion common to many Europeans – Canetti in the novel, Penderecki in music – that the heavier the art-apparatus, the better the art.

Personals

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*Selected by blue-ribbon panel of turophiles including *Chevalier* of famed *Confrerie du Taste-Fromage de France.*

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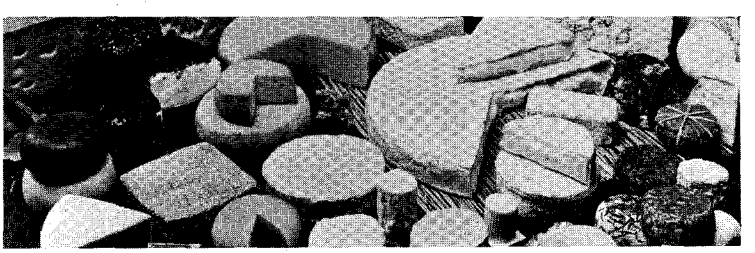

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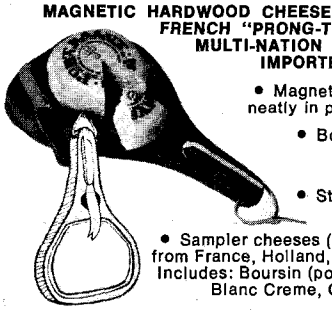

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